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Contents

EDITORIAL PARAGRAPHS 127
EDITORIALS:
Our Mexican Diplomacy 130
Mr. Norris Indicts the President 131
Our Financial Battle-Line 131
The Bottom of the Well 132
THE UNIVERSE, INC. By Hendrik van Loon 133
LETTERS FROM TOLSTOI. Translated by Herman George Scheffauer 134
LABOR CAPITALISM—WHERE DOES IT LEAD? By Cedric Long 136
THE SECRET SORROW OF THE WHITE HOUSE. By Frank R. Kent 138
IN THE DRIFTWAY. By the Drifter 139
CORRESPONDENCE 139
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SECTION:
Intrigue in the Middle East. By Albin E. Johnson 141

MIDWINTER BOOK SECTION

THE NATION'S PRIZE POEM FOR 1926:
Thoughts at the Year's End. By Babette Deutsch 143
ALDOUS HUXLEY. By Edwin Muir 144
THEY WANTED TO TELL. By Floyd Dell 146
THE POLITICAL THEORY OF HAROLD J. LASKI. By Walter James Shepard 147
BOOKS:
First Glance. By Mark Van Doren 149
"The Fanatic of Liberty." By Clarence Walworth Alvord 150
A Peculiar Wanderer. By Henry W. Nevinson 150
Crime and Punishment. By Joseph Wood Krutch 152
Admonitions from the Motherland. By H. L. Mencken 152
Christian Science. By Joseph Jastrow 154
Relativity and Reality. By Edwin E. Slosson 157
Until Utopia. By Carl Becker 158
Two Artists and a Critic. By Thomas Munro 159
Good Prose. By Allen Tate 160
Books in Brief 162
MUSIC:
Puppet and Conductor. By Henrietta Straus 164
DRAMA:
The Tragedy of Masks. By Joseph Wood Krutch 164

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THE PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S rescue of twenty-five men from the sinking steamer Antinoe, at the cost of the lives of two of her own crew and the loss of five life-boats, constitutes one of the most gallant feats in the annals of Atlantic seamanship; one of which all Americans may well be proud. It even surpasses the achievement of her sister ship the President Harding in December last. We believe that the President Roosevelt's master, Captain Fried, broke all records in the length of time—four days—that he stood by the Antinoe. When one considers how much speed counts with a mail-carrying passenger liner the financial sacrifice was not inconsiderable. There can, however, be no better advertisement for a line than to have such captains as those of the Roosevelt and the Harding. It is pleasant, too, to record the fact that the North German Lloyd liner Bremen made an equally gallant attempt to succor the British ship Laristan, from which she did pluck six men, the others perishing when their vessel sank at night. The German skipper's skill in picking up the Laristan with only slight indications as to her whereabouts has compelled the admiration of the shipping world. What a happy change from a few years ago to have German sailors risking their lives to save some of their former enemies! As to Captain Fried, his success is all the more noteworthy because of the cockleshell life-boats that are carried by most liners. It would seem that every line ought to be willing to place on board each ship some specially equipped non-capsizable motor life-boats of the type used by our Coast Guard.

THE SUCCESSFUL FLIGHT of the Spanish aviator, Commander Ramon Franco, and his companions from Spain to South America is another notable event in the history of aviation. With comparatively little fuss and feathers, and only three or four warships to patrol the course, they took their long jump, 1,432 miles, from the Cape Verde Islands to the island of Fernando de Noronha in fifteen hours. The flight to Pernambuco was a matter of only 279 miles. Not unnaturally the Spaniards are elated by this successful feat. Already they are talking of a cross-Atlantic dirigible line based at Seville. The airport soon to be built there is to cost 31,000,000 pesetas. But it is not the commercial prospects which are thrilling the Spaniards today. They are particularly happy that Spanish adventurers have been the first to cross the South Atlantic in spite of the familiar Nordic sneers at all Latins, and they see in it another strong tie with South America, even if it should prove to be only a sentimental one.

MR. HOOVER seems to have put all the blame for high tire-prices on the British Government's rubber monopoly. But in doing so he has told only half the story of prices, and the smaller half at that. Now comes Representative Shallenberger with the other—and more important—half. He sat on the committee to which Mr. Hoover appealed. He says: "There is about ten pounds of crude rubber in the average standard tire. The British rubber control has advanced the average price of that crude rubber about fifty cents a pound. That accounts for a $5 advance in the cost of making a tire. But a thirty-three by six Goodrich balloon tire and tube which cost $30 before the British advance now costs $54, or an increase to the American buyer of $24. We have found that the Englishman got the $5, but who got the other $19?" Some light on the mystery is thrown by recent profit-and-loss accounts. In regard to them Mr. Shallenberger goes on to say: "The big tire companies all show the greatest net profits for 1925 of any year in their history. The Fisk Company more than doubled their previous profits; Goodrich netted $15,000,000; Firestone earned 26 per cent; United Rubber 25 per cent. . . . It seems to me that instead of investigating English rubber we had better get after the American tire manufacturer." What have you to say to this, Mr. Hoover?

WARREN WORTH BAILEY is being kept out of his seat in Congress by one of those miserable technicalities of the law which so constantly bring American justice into contempt. On the face of the returns in the

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congressional election of 1924 in the twentieth Pennsylvania district Mr. Bailey was beaten by about twenty-seven votes. An official count, which he demanded, developed errors in the returns which gave to Mr. Bailey a clear majority of fourteen. Twenty-four hours later his opponent, Mr. Walters, demanded of the courts a certificate of election based on the original returns, on the ground that the computation board, which made the official count, had exceeded its powers in opening certain boxes and correcting errors. No one has questioned the accuracy of the recount, but for nearly fifteen months Mr. Bailey has been deprived of his seat because the courts have been passing upon whether in a congressional election canvassing boards can go behind the returns to correct errors or detect fraud in order to obtain a true count. It is, of course, of the utmost importance that the election of Mr. Bailey be upheld, not only because he is morally and legally entitled to his seat, but because, if canvassing boards may not go behind the returns in congressional elections, the door is thrown wide open to fraud and corruption. One of the worst features, moreover, is that although Mr. Bailey is obviously the winner of the contest the whole burden and expense of the litigation have been placed upon him instead of upon his antagonist. The matter is now before Congress, and there, too, it seems as if every possible delay were being contrived in order to keep Mr. Bailey out of his seat.

IF A THOUSAND SOLDIERS are necessary in Kentucky to see that justice is done one Negro accused of a revolting crime, a determined Governor is ready to furnish them. Eight companies of infantry with appropriate artillery were called out to protect John Henry Jones, black, confessed murderer of a man and his two children and attacker of his wife. A courageous sheriff and a posse of obstinate men refused to give up their prisoner to a mob and beat off the Negro fellow-convicts who sought to lynch him in the jail. There is, in this case, no doubt that the crime was committed by the accused; it was a hideous and bestial act without any mitigating circumstances; if ever a lynching seemed justified, here was the time. But a lynching is never justified in a state that calls itself civilized, and Governor Fields is evidently bound that Kentucky shall deserve that appellation. The time will come, undoubtedly, when it will not be necessary to call out troops in order that simple justice may be done; but the South has a long and dark record of dealing without the law, and men do not learn to change completely overnight. Meanwhile Kentucky lines up with Mississippi in an honest, brave, and forthright attempt to clean house.

AFTER TWELVE YEARS in prison Richard Ford has been acquitted in California of the murder of a deputy whom no one ever thought he had actually killed. The question, of course, was not a simple killing: it was whether, as leader of a protest meeting at a hop-pickers' camp that turned into a riot at which two deputies and two workers were shot, Ford could have been called the murderer of the deputies. At his trial for the death of the first deputy in 1913, a jury found Ford guilty of murder; his life sentence was commuted last fall but he was immediately rearrested, charged with the murder of the second officer. He has just been acquitted. Ford is therefore, in the eyes of the law, guilty of murdering one deputy and not of murdering the other, and has in addition twelve years of prison to remember. But perhaps belated justice is better than none at all; and a return to some degree of sanity in California cannot be unwelcome. In Pittsburgh they are still jailing men for sedition; the first of nine men accused of "distributing pamphlets and belonging to an organization advocating the overthrow of the government" has been found guilty. Presumably the other eight will be convicted. So the nervous tremors of our officials continue, sedition laws remain firm upon our statute books, and when occasionally a ray of common sense—as in the Ford case—pierces the gloom of panic we must be astonished; we cannot expect, as a matter of course, justice and dignity in trials involving popular prejudice.

NEWS THAT COMMUNISM was raging at Ohio State University set the venerable authorities by the ears. But a thorough investigation of the alleged seditious and "red" activities of certain members of the faculty ought certainly to have allayed their fears forever. Thus Professor Albert R. Chandler testified that he "had joined the Committee of 48 which seemed to be behind an effort to revive the Roosevelt Progressive Party"; this had evidently been the extent of Professor Chandler's dangerous acts; said he: "No good professor is likely to indorse the present government of Russia, nor to lead his students to do so." Mr. Chandler does not, he testified, consider the Committee of 48 either socialistic or communistic. Professor H. G. Hayes of the economics department was asked to testify because he teaches a course in socialism; but Mr. Hayes, too, was quick to deny any really socialistic yearnings: "Because I teach a course called socialism does not mean that I am a socialist. I never have voted for any other than a Republican or a Democratic candidate except on one occasion when I voted for a Prohibitionist." Asked if he advocated socialism in his classes, Mr. Hayes replied: "Indeed, no. I usually have two or three out of my class of twenty-five who are confirmed socialists at the beginning of the course, but for the most part . . . I believe they change their opinions before the course is completed." All the faculty united in declaring the student body more law-abiding than it had been in years, and in denying that there was any prevalence of drinking; and none of them had ever heard of one of their own number who was a socialist or communist. Thus is Ohio State discovered to be 100 per cent pure.

WILLIAM B. WARD, our baking king, has decided to sugar-coat the trust pill he has prepared by giving to the board of directors of his gigantic company the power to make contributions from their surplus or net profits for the erection or maintenance of one or more hospitals, infirmaries, or homes for invalid or aged employees of the company. More than that, whenever a full dividend (7 per cent) has been paid upon the preferred stock, some of the surplus is to be used "for the advancement of the right of every child to be born well, to grow to maturity physically and mentally fit for American citizenship, and generally for the advancement of the health and welfare of the American people, and dividends upon the common stock may then be declared out of the remainder of surplus or net profits." We admit that this is unique in company financing and promoting, but much as we are interested in the welfare of the American child and the American people

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somehow or other we cannot rejoice about it, particularly the provision that the gift to the children shall come before the common-stock dividends. This is mixing philanthropy and business, and however well meant it may be—we credit Mr. Ward with a genuine zest for well-doing—we cannot but feel that it is a mistake, if only because it will be accepted by the public as an effort to still criticism and to pave the way for an even greater control of the staff of life of the American people.

FRENCH FINANCE and, therefore, France's entire national life, is in a more hopeful position. No acceptable program for balancing the budget has yet been found by Parliament, it is true, but the state of the public mind seems to have changed in a way that is encouraging. From the Treaty of Versailles to the fall of Poincaré the French people lived under the fatal illusion that Germany was going to pay their debts. Then they struggled on for months under the equally evanescent dream that nobody need pay them. Early this winter, when one finance minister after another had gone down in the vain attempt to devise an acceptable program, and with the franc falling catastrophically, it looked as if the entire financial fabric might collapse before the people woke. Happily the national psychology seems to have changed. Three months ago the French were asking, Shall we pay taxes? Now they are asking, Who shall pay taxes? That is a great advance. Fortunately, also, Premier Briand will not make the acceptance of the plan of Paul Doumer, his Minister of Finance, one of ministerial confidence. He is willing to take the Doumer plan or that of the Left Bloc, as the Chamber decides. So there is hope that some scheme for balancing the budget will win. Probably it will be a compromise, with the poor man, as usual, carrying the heavy end. But even for the poor man this may be better than a collapse of the national finances. Meanwhile the exchange value of the franc has remained in a position of virtual equilibrium for some weeks, a situation which, if it continues, should assist decidedly in straightening out the financial tangle.

IF THE FRENCH, as part of their financial measures, should enact the proposal to raise their import duties 30 per cent, how our protectionists would rejoice, especially as France buys more from us than from any other country and in 1925 imported goods valued at 6,382,900,000 francs! The action would, of course, put our American manufacturers to their trumps, unless perhaps they were prepared to do some wholesale dumping. Well, it is all part of the after-war madness. Some Frenchmen think their country could raise several hundred millions of francs by such tariff levies —provided, of course, that the demand for foreign goods continued after French consumers realized that those products cost them 30 per cent more. It is interesting to note that the conservative French dailies are not to be fooled as to what the scheme would mean to the French buyer. Thus the *Temps* declares that "of all taxes on consumption, customs duties are the most detestable," points out that the yield has always been mediocre, and correctly asserts that such duties immediately send up domestic prices and thereby increase the cost of living. Finally the *Temps* indicates the possibility (it could well say probability) of commercial conflicts, of the cancelation by other countries of existing treaties, and of trade reprisals. The *Temps*, at least, has gone to the heart of the protection folly.

EGYPT, like various other oppressed nations, has two governments. One cooperates happily and profitably with the oppressor; the other pretends at least to represent the majority. When Ziwar Pasha, present Premier of Egypt and head of the pro-British Unionist Party, returned from Europe last fall he ordered the Parliament dispersed. Its membership too generally supported Zaghlul Pasha and the policy of complete independence. Thereupon the Zaghlulist members, about 130 of them, met under the leadership of Zaghlul himself, declared themselves the Parliament, adopted resolutions, and adjourned. They have not met since. Meanwhile, the Ziwar Cabinet has promulgated a new election law and is preparing for a nation-wide election designed to produce a more amenable and loyal Parliament. In order to carry out the polling, the provincial mayors, called omdehs, must make out lists of electors. Several hundred omdehs have refused to do this. Many have been arrested, tried, and fined, and, on their promise to comply with the instructions, permitted to return to office. No sooner are they back on the job than they renounce their promise and try passive resistance again. The Zaghlul Party may obtain a majority in the coming elections in spite of the Government's elaborate precautions. The feeling against the British and the present subservient cabinet is bitter. Recently when King Fuad passed through the streets of Cairo in an open carriage he was greeted with shouts of "Long live Zaghlul!" If the Zaghlulists win the election, or if passive resistance increases, the British authorities, through the strong arm of the High Commissioner, will doubtless take the necessary measures to "maintain order" and "support the Government." And the joke of Egyptian independence will become manifest to the world.

THE DEATH of Anna Kuliscioff in Milan on December 29 brings grief not only to Filippo Turati and to their daughter but to all who remember this remarkable Russian as the outstanding figure in the struggles of Italian liberalism from 1878 to 1912. Then, broken in health, she was forced to give up her dramatic career as a Socialist leader and the founder of the woman's movement in Italy. A political exile from Russia at seventeen, she was active among the refugees in Switzerland, and had served a prison sentence in Paris when she went to Italy to study medicine and take an active part in the liberating movement. Arrested by the Italian police, she baffled the judges with her keenness of mind. Though finally acquitted, her fourteen months of imprisonment had permanently shattered her health. But this did not stop her work. She completed her medical studies at the University of Naples. Then she practiced obstetrics as a profession while she brought up her own baby at home and continued to lecture and write for the Socialist Party. In 1891 she and Turati founded *Critica Sociale*. In 1898 her work was interrupted by a year in prison. After her release she devoted herself more and more to the problem of the proletarian woman. The law on woman and child labor, passed in 1904, was her work. She started the first women's newspaper in Italy in 1909. The following tribute is paid to her by *Lavoro* (Genoa): "Whatever great and good things have been accomplished by Italian socialism (and there have been many) were initiated and made possible by her; all the errors made by Italian socialism (and there have been many) were denounced by her, and would have been avoided if her advice had been followed." In spirits such as hers lies not only the hope of Italy but the hope of the world.

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Our Mexican Diplomacy

FOR fifteen years the diplomatic relationship of the United States with its one independent land neighbor has been a story of continuous official ineptitude. During a period analogous in the Mexican national existence with our revolutionary and confederation days, our administrations have been generally antagonistic in spirit, frequently hostile in word and deed, consistently supercilious and bullying, and always profoundly stupid in their attitude toward Mexico's efforts to shake off the shackles of a medieval feudalism and secure the life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness that belong to free peoples.

The connivance of Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson in the overthrow of Madero and the seating of a bloody butcher in the Mexican presidential chair forms one of the blackest and most sordid chapters in our foreign relations. President Wilson, though wise enough to dismiss that diplomatist, was himself responsible for the needless slaughter at Vera Cruz of several hundred Mexicans, most of them little more than boys, and of seventeen Americans.

Then came Mr. Fall. But even after his well-oiled exit into oblivion Secretary Hughes persisted in seeking to impose on Mexico a legislative program conceived in petroleum and dedicated to the proposition that American property rights take precedence over Mexican national needs and aspirations. Recognition was granted only grudgingly in response to overwhelming public sentiment in the United States and the exigencies of a presidential campaign.

What might then have become an era of unprecedented good-feeling and mutual cooperation between the two governments—a friendliness already established and steadily growing between the two peoples—was marred by the monumental Kellogg-Sheffield blunder in June last. But the stinging rebuff from the American press, 80 per cent of which indorsed the Calles stand against its own government, taught Mr. Kellogg nothing.

In November, last, the American embassy viewed the proposed Mexican petroleum legislation with such anticipatory alarm that an informal communication to the Mexican Government suggested that its enactment would affect the good relations between the two countries and render a continuation of the policy initiated during President Obregon's regime impossible. Implied, of course, was the threat to withdraw recognition.

It should be understood that Mexico's legislation in this and many other matters prescribed by the Constitution of 1917 has been long delayed—largely because of constant pressure from Washington. The provisions of that document, which the Mexicans rightly consider as the Magna Charta of their emancipation, form the basis for the country's fundamental laws. The bone of contention in the new oil law which enacts a portion of Article 27—vesting the subsoil rights in the nation—is that the petroleum rights acquired prior to 1917 in fee will become leaseholds at the end of fifty years. The oil in the properties involved is four-fifths exhausted. At the present rate of production it will be non-existent in five years. To assert that such a provision is confiscatory and retroactive is, at best, the quintessence of legalism. But whatever the purely technical aspects, similar and far more confiscatory laws relating to foreign-property holdings have been enacted in many American States. No foreign government questions our right so to legislate.

The Mexican Government replied setting forth its view that the legislation is not confiscatory and retroactive and citing many analogies and precedents from our own legislation. Such an exchange of views would appear a proper way of arriving at an understanding were not the American efforts—apart from the threatening implications of our first note—accompanied, as always, with collateral and gravely prejudicial manifestations.

The Washington *Post*, looked upon as a quasi-official spokesman for the State Department, on January 11 sent up a trial balloon in the shape of an editorial violently denouncing the "communist" Mexican Government and the proposed legislation, ending with this significant paragraph:

> A respectable portion of the Mexican people detests the communist movement and would overthrow it if opportunity afforded. Many influential army officers are disgusted with the communization of the national army. It is quite possible that the communist excesses will drive the Mexican people to revolt, in which case Calles would be succeeded by an executive willing to fulfil international obligations and capable of doing so. If the Calles administration should proceed with its confiscatory plans despite the American protest it would be the duty of the United States to withdraw recognition, sever diplomatic relations, and *interpose no obstacle to a movement by the Mexican people to set up a responsible republican government.*

While a few of the rebels surviving from the De la Huerta revolt, amply financed, slip across the border and make an abortive attempt to capture a barracks, an incident which lends itself easily to magnifying in the press dispatches, one of the confidential news services in Washington which presumes to give the "straight inside dope" sends out the report that "a revolution is brewing in Mexico, *financed by conservatives*, due to break around the middle of March, *causing only temporary disturbance to business.*" It was Secretary Kellogg himself in his newspaper statement of June 12, last, who first suggested the possibility of impending rebellion in Mexico.

Needless to say this information is as false as the gruesome picture painted by the *Post*. Communism is non-existent in Mexican government circles, while the Mexican labor movement has drastically combated its sporadic manifestations. On the contrary, the Calles Government, while adhering unflinchingly to its wholly moderate, pledged program of land reform, education, labor organization, and revindication of national rights, has leaned over backward in its efforts to satisfy its foreign and domestic creditors and to reestablish peace and security for life and property.

One can hardly expect a Secretary of State who has never exhibited a bowing acquaintance with traditional American principles to be interested in the development of democracy and self-government, in the land of our neighbor. But a modicum of intelligence would indicate, in the interest of American investments which are his only concern, the advisability of supporting the regime in Mexico which is successfully building an orderly political and economic structure on the ruins of the past. Fortunately, Mr. Kellogg's press feelers have shown that the American people are better informed about Mexico than he is and do not de-

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sire to impair friendly relations with neighbors in behalf of a handful of concessionnaires. Senator La Follette's resolution, meanwhile, is an attempt to bring into the daylight of open diplomacy the communications that have passed between the two governments, publication of which by the Mexican Government has so far been withheld out of courtesy for the State Department's wishes. Mr. Kellogg's sudden shyness has one gratifying implication: he realizes that he has again blundered and would like to withdraw as quietly and inconspicuously as possible from the blustering position to which he has committed our Government.

Mr. Norris Indicts the President

BY all odds the most serious charge yet brought against Calvin Coolidge was that made by Senator Norris of Nebraska in his speech in the Senate on January 23. In its essence, it is that, for political reasons, the President, then being a candidate for reelection, asked William S. Culbertson of the Tariff Commission to delay the report on the sugar tariff until after the election. The Tariff Commission is a semi-judicial body. It was created by Congress to pass upon the tariff schedules in the interest of the protected manufacturers and also of the public, and to do so scientifically and independently of both the Executive and the Congress. Mr. Norris charged and proved—no denial of any kind has come from the White House—that the commission, standing three to two in favor of reporting to the President a reduction of the sugar tariff, every effort was made to bribe, cajole, and threaten Mr. Culbertson to withhold the report in direct violation of his duty as a public official.

The facts, as Senator Norris proved them by Mr. Culbertson's own contemporary memoranda, are as follows:

1. The Tariff Commission was first deadlocked, three to three on the sugar report.

2. Mr. Glassie of Louisiana being disqualified on the initiative of Mr. Culbertson, because it appeared that his family owned $200,000 worth of stock in a sugar corporation, the commission stood three to two in favor of sending the sugar-tariff report to Mr. Coolidge.

3. An offensive against Mr. Culbertson was begun.

(*a*) He was summoned to a conference by Senator Smoot at which he found between fifteen and twenty persons, among them another sugar Senator and a Representative; the rest were business men interested in sugar. At this conference Mr. Culbertson, being both a judge and juror, was subjected to pressure and told how these parties to the suit desired him and his associates to proceed.

(*b*) Next Mr. Culbertson was summoned to the White House by the Secretary to the President and before him was held out an appointment in the diplomatic service which Mr. Culbertson had long coveted. Mr. Slemp dangled before him the possibility of his appointment as Minister to China or as Agent General of Reparations or as Governor General of the Philippines. Prior to that interview he had also been offered a position on the Federal Trade Commission.

(*c*) Mr. Culbertson, having agreed to deliver some lectures at Georgetown University and the Williamstown Institute of Politics, suddenly found the legality of these actions challenged. An Assistant Attorney General, Mr. Martin, assured two of Mr. Culbertson's associates, Messrs. Lewis and Costigan, that he had not violated the law, that an opinion favoring him had been drawn and was to be signed by the Attorney General that day (July 21, 1924). Three days later Messrs. Lewis and Costigan were invited to see Attorney General Stone at once; when they arrived there lay before him an adverse opinion as to Mr. Culbertson. When they asked for delay in order to present their views in writing, Mr. Stone refused to hold the opinion because he had been ordered to send it to the President at once.

(*d*) The next day (July 25, 1924) Mr. Culbertson was summoned to the White House. Mr. Coolidge discussed with him the Attorney General's unfavorable opinion as to his lecturing and *with it as a threat asked Mr. Culbertson to delay the sugar report* which it was the Commissioner's duty to present.

(*e*) Mr. Culbertson refusing, he was later appointed Minister to Rumania but not until the sugar-tariff report had gone to the President, who pigeonholed and did not act on it for eight months, that is, until the presidential election had come and gone.

It seems to us that there is no mistaking the facts here set forth; the President deliberately tried to threaten and bribe an office-holder of the United States to withhold a semi-judicial opinion simply and solely because of the effect it might have upon his political fortunes. In a lesser person Mr. Coolidge's action in threatening Mr. Culbertson as he did might easily be termed blackmail. Yet because of the paralysis of the critical faculty in our press and our public men, and the partisanship of the Republican organs, there has been scarcely any editorial comment upon this performance of the President. Had such a charge been brought against Grover Cleveland or Benjamin Harrison or William H. Taft or Woodrow Wilson, it would just about have wrecked their administrations. Fortunately for the sake of the truth, Senator Norris has lived up to his reputation of fearlessly defending our American institutions and castigating misconduct in office, whether in the White House or anywhere else.

Our Financial Battle-Line

WITHIN the last few years we Americans have been somewhat startled, rather proud, and not a little puzzled to discover that we have become the controlling financial power of the world, a great creditor nation instead of a debtor country; that a host of persons abroad are paying us an annual tribute in interest, and that we are approaching the position of the king in his counting-house with nothing more laborious to do than "counting out his money." Hard work and good fortune have combined in about equal parts to transform us in 150 years from a poverty-stricken band of insignificant colonists into a position of world dictatorship and hitherto unknown affluence. Our natural resources were the most splendid, probably, with which any country has ever been endowed. To subdue them Europe contributed some 30,000,000 immigrants (12,000,000 from 1900 to 1920) raised to manhood at her expense and given to us in the prime of life for nothing. We ourselves supplied the industry, the intelligence, and the discipline to weld out of this our present greatness.

There is no minimizing that greatness of its significance. The United States today produces a quarter of the world's wheat, half of its iron and coal, three-fifths of its aluminum, copper, and cotton, two-thirds of its oil, three-

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fourths of its corn, and nine-tenths of its automobiles. Our national wealth, which in 1850 was placed at about seven billion dollars, was estimated by the Census Bureau as 322 billions in 1922. Our national income is believed to be as great as that of Great Britain, France, Italy, Russia, and Germany all rolled together. The growth of our wealth and income has been especially marked since the beginning of this century, at which time, roughly speaking, our change began from a pastoral and agricultural community into a manufacturing and financial power. Whatever the course of events, the United States was doubtless destined to become the dominant commercial power of the twentieth century, as Great Britain was of the nineteenth, but that destiny was acutely accentuated by the World War. In the year 1914, despite our rapid rise as an industrial power, we were still a debtor nation. Already our foreign investments were placed at more than $2,500,000,000, but the Comptroller of the Currency estimated that overseas investors held from four to five billion dollars' worth of American securities, which left a substantial balance against us.

During and after the war an Aladdinlike change occurred, the extent and significance of which is just beginning to be appreciated. Our profits have been so phenomenal that we have not only put a vast sum of new capital into enlarging our industrial plant but have been obliged to send great sums abroad for investment. Private American investment abroad now totals more than ten billion dollars, in addition to which the United States Government has loaned sums to foreign states which with accumulated interest now amount to some twelve billions. Thus in a little over a decade we have increased our foreign holdings nearly tenfold.

The political responsibilities and complications of this situation, obviously tremendous, are suggested in two recent books, "Dollar Diplomacy," by Scott Nearing and Joseph Freeman, and "American Foreign Investments," by Robert W. Dunn.* The authors of the first book expressly disclaim that it is a history of American imperialism, but it is an excellent presentation for the general reader of the rise, scope, and possibilities of its most important phases. Mr. Dunn's volume, chiefly statistical and documentary, is a mine for the student who wants to dig into the subject for himself. Both volumes raise issues with which Americans who want to know where their country is going should become familiar. The United States has begun a career of financial and economic direction and dictation of the world. There is no stopping it by moral appeals or political expedients. The United States is the culmination and the stronghold of the profits system of industry. Its course is inevitable and unchangeable unless the profits system itself is abandoned or until it comes head on into collision with a rival method that is better and more vital.

The only better methods now visible seem to lie in the direction of cooperative production and distribution by large groups on a voluntary non-political basis, or in government control. Probably a combination of the two, wherever one or the other may be realized, presents the greatest immediate possibilities. Certainly those who refuse to accept one or the other of these methods, and yet hope to save their country from becoming a world tyrant and oppressor, are unaware of the facts or lost in sophistries.

* Both are published by B. W. Huebsch and the Viking Press, the first at $2.50 and the other at $5.

The Bottom of the Well

THE pleasure of reading a very good poem is equaled only by that of reading a very bad one. Some persons consider the second pleasure infinitely greater and purer than the first, and it would be difficult to prove them wrong, though it would be easy to call them perverse. We hope that we commit no sin against humanity or good taste when we confess that we enjoyed the worst poems submitted in *The Nation's* poetry contest, just concluded, quite as much as we enjoyed those which we were bold enough to vote the best. For the middling pieces there is not so much to be said. Average poems, like average people, are dull beyond discussion. But if we admired the clear waters at the top of the well whose depths we sounded, we also felt affection for the honest gravel at the bottom.

There was the historical ballad, for instance, which informed us that

> When it was known that Polk was the
> Presidential nominee,
> The news was flashed the wires o'er
> To Washington from Baltimore,

and which went on to treat of the various problems confronting Polk once he was elected:

> After Polk's inauguration,
> The first work for consideration
> That was of real vital concern,
> Was right to Oregon confirm. . . .
>
> Just before inauguration
> Congress approved the annexation
> Of Texas to the Union, tho
> Not approved by Mexico.

The author of the foregoing stanzas may or may not have wanted us to smile. Probably he did not. But another ballad-writer, to judge by internal evidence which there is no space to spread upon the record, was certainly serious from the first word of his contribution to the last. The reader may guess the extent to which this solemnity was contagious from the following stanza:

> Oh, a shipwrecked sailor am I!
> For my ship has sunk to the bottom of the sea
> And if you will give me your kind attention please
> I will spin you a yarn that is worth a piece of cheese.

The last two lines here were worth considering as an attempt to convey a nonchalant, even a cynical, view of all that is most familiar in romantic verse. But in view of the true tragedy which was developed in the course of succeeding stanzas we had to pronounce the couplet a failure and proceed to another piece whose purpose was definitely comic. It seems that

> Once upon a time there was a learned doc,
> Who never deigned to wear other than silk sock,
> And who graced his noble brow with purple lock,
> And kept his time one hour off the local clock.

But his pride went before a fall. For

> When it came that he should fall badly ill
> He phoned the apothecary for quinine pill
> And of them he did take half a gill
> And now other doctors are trying their skill.

Our smiles were broader at this point than even the author, perhaps, had hoped they would be. So on and on. To anyone afflicted with melancholy we recommend a poetry contest of his own. The Muses will save him, or nothing can.

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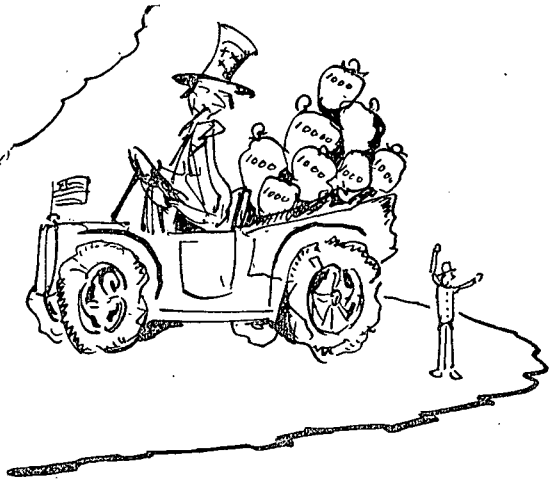
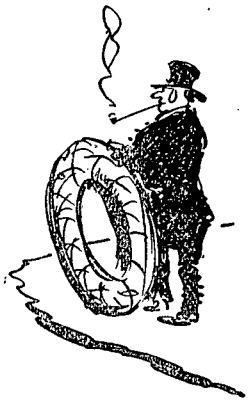
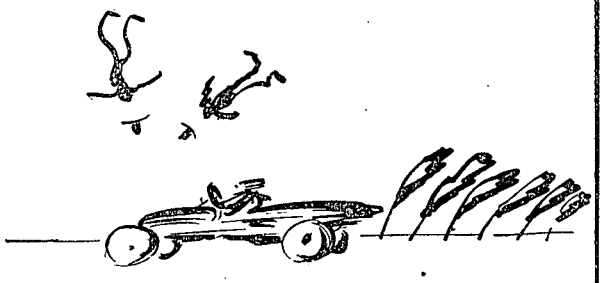
The Universe, Inc. By H. v. L.





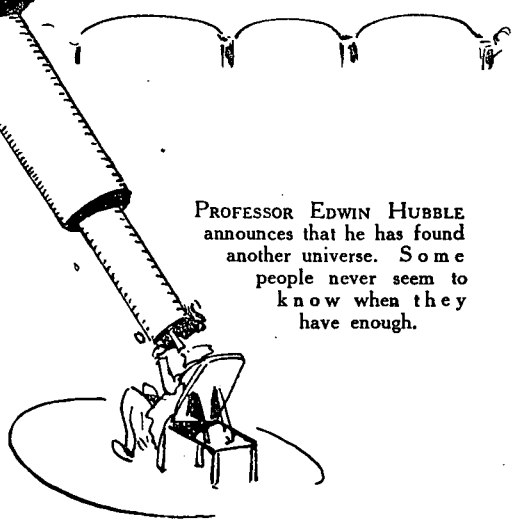
MR. HOOVER SHOUTS ACROSS THE OCEAN to Mr. John Windsor Bull "You are an extortioner," and Mr. Bull pleasantly answers "So is your old man."

THE ALUMINUM PEOPLE have begun a national advertising campaign.



THE NATIONAL AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION announces that there were 4 per cent more accidents last year than the year before and we all rejoice that the industry is picking up so nicely.

THE NATIONAL SECURITY LEAGUE demands an official investigation of the funds dispensed by the late Dr. Benjamin Franklin of Philadelphia to discover whether he did not receive money from foreign Powers.



PROFESSOR EDWIN HUBBLE announces that he has found another universe. Some people never seem to know when they have enough.

H.v.L.

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Letters from Tolstoi

Translated by HERMAN GEORGE SCHEFFAUER

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[*These letters, hitherto unpublished, were written between the years 1894 and 1910 to Eugen Heinrich Schmitt of Budapest, author of books on philosophy and leader of a group called the League of Gnostics. Schmitt was the editor of a small weekly,* Ohne Staat, *a philosophical anarchist paper, which opposed all forms of service to the state—especially military service. He was a social and political idealist and close to Tolstoi in many of his beliefs. The letters in this series, written originally in German, were obtained from his widow, now living in Berlin. They will appear consecutively in several issues of* The Nation.]

I

August 18/30, 1894

DEAR SIR:

I have long since received your letter and your pamphlet "Mammon and Belial," and I thank you heartily for both. I believe the time has now come for us to devote the greatest energy to the end of destroying the basic falsehoods upon which all the evils of our human society are established, as you already attempt to do in your pamphlet. The greatest enemy of truth, and therefore of true progress, is today not ignorance, but the treacherous compromises which have made their way into all conditions of life. To expose these and to express the truth about life in a brief, clear, and simple form must be the most urgent and most important activity of our time.

I shall have your pamphlet translated and give it the greatest possible circulation. I would also like to have some idea of your journal. I am not able to subscribe to it, because of the censorship, but if you would send it to Professor Nicolai Grott, at the University of Moscow, I should be most grateful and would at once send the fee to the address given. God aid you in your courageous and beneficent work.

Your friend
LEO TOLSTOI

II

October 6/18, 1894

DEAR SIR:

I received your letter with the open appeal. In all frankness the appeal did not please me. From it I can obtain no clear conception of the religious Weltanschauung of the members of your league. I hope to find this more exactly defined in the periodical. I have not yet received this. The description of your personal affairs interested me exceedingly. The position which every man must adopt who earnestly accepts the true and only religion of our time—whether this be called Christian or the *Religion of the Spirit*—and serves this religion in his daily life, is the same everywhere. I am convinced that the most important as well as the most difficult thing for those of us who would serve truth is not the interpretation of religious principles but the carrying-out of these principles in our actual life.

As to your relationship to the intelligentsia and to the laboring classes—things are precisely the same with us. The intelligentsia seeks salvation where no salvation is to be found, and as a matter of fact it is not quite sincere in its activity—it wishes to do good without sacrificing any of its advantages. The workers who incline to the socialistic creed endeavor to change the present condition of things not because it is unjust and prejudicial to love, but simply because justice in this case would bring them certain advantages. Salvation, I believe, will come neither from the workmen who are socialistically inclined nor from their leaders, but only from people who will accept religion as their only guide in life, as the Nazarenes in Serbia and others in certain places in Austria do—namely, that hundreds of them refuse to take the oath and do military service and are condemned for this to spend years in prisons and fortresses. It is only from such men as these who are ready to give up their lives for their convictions that salvation will come. Men like these are to be found everywhere and we ourselves must become such men in order to fulfil our destinies and to imbue others with our spirit.

I believe that you are such a man and therefore I am most happy to be in direct contact with you. My letters are badly written and they are not worth publishing. But as soon as opportunity presents itself I shall write something for your paper and send it to you.

Your friend
LEO TOLSTOI

III

February 1/13, 1895

DEAR FRIEND:

I received your letters and was overjoyed to hear the good news contained in them. Your work, *our* work, that is to say God's work, makes great progress in your hands. I may say the same in respect not only to Russia, but also to England (Kenworthy, Morrison), Lachmann (Denmark), Sweden and Finland (Ernefeld).

I thank you heartily for your two pamphlets which please me greatly, especially "The Hunt," and in a still greater degree the suit-at-law which arose from this. I cannot, however, say the same with regard to "The Catechism of the Religion of the Spirit." Although there is not a single point on which I do not agree, yet I would have liked to see more profundity in the whole and as a consequence more unity. Nevertheless, I send you my cordial thanks not only for the message but also for the book. It will serve to help many people to establish this new, more rational and sublime Weltanschauung. Both pamphlets shall be translated into Russian and will appear in our journal which is published here—not in a printed, but a hand-written form.

I regret that I have so far not received the periodical. No doubt the censorship got hold of it. Please send this if possible, as well as all other things, to me in care of Professor Grott at the University of Moscow. And please be so good as to convey my gratitude and my love to all our friends and fellows in the faith.

I have a short article, actually a letter upon the subject of the relation between faith and reason, which I can

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let you have, if you wish. But please let me know if you have a good translator from the Russian at hand, or whether I shall send you the article in German.

Your friend
LEO TOLSTOI

IV

DEAR FRIEND:

I have received your letter with number 5 of your periodical, and have read your article upon Egidy. Like all your writings this pleased me as a whole very much. I am especially delighted with the sincerity and fire of your writings, but what you mention on pages 144 and 145 in relation to your Weltanschauung I could not approve. One can never rightly estimate the importance of one's own thoughts; one must leave that to others. But your point of view is not your own but the Christian as we must deduce it from the New Testament if we read this without any preconceived intention. Your merit consists in this—that you have illuminated this Weltanschauung from a new side. Excuse me, my dear friend, for permitting myself to make these remarks. I do this only because I love you and treasure your activity very highly and expect great things of it.

My friend Makovizky has, I hope, already sent you the preface which you may publish in your periodical—if you wish. I am now sending you a small correspondence written by a friend of mine upon the persecution of the Dukhobors with a short article written by me in relation to this matter. The correspondence is too long for publication in your magazine, but if you think well of it you might make an extract and print it with my article as an afterword.

The correspondence, however, I should like to see published in the German, Austrian, and Prussian newspapers of greatest circulation with my short letter or with the appendix.

Should this translation and the sending about of this correspondence cause you too much trouble then please send it to Makovizky who will attend to everything. I am writing to him by the same post.

Your friend—who loves you with all his heart,
LEO TOLSTOI

V

May 2, 1885

DEAR FRIEND:

I have received your letter with the number of the publication and I have read the article entitled Christ and Buddha with great interest. The article contains a great deal that is valuable and new respecting the basic principles of both religions, of which we hear so much, and the essential difference between the religion of pity and the religion of love has been adjudged most correctly by you.

In the same issue I find an article upon the text: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." Some years ago I wrote a short article upon the false interpretation of this text, and I believe that this has never been translated into German. The article will be sent you from Geneva and if you wish you can publish it in your review.

Your friend
LEO TOLSTOI

VI

3/1 July, 1895

DEAR FRIEND:

You must forgive me for not having answered your letter for so long a time. The death of my child and the sickness of my wife and my own which followed it and from which I have just recovered, were the causes of the delay. I have received all the letters and other things you sent me, and as I remember I replied to your pamphlet "Herodes." But however this may be, I shall now answer your letter of June 20.

The attitude which the Social-Democrats adopt toward you is nothing new to me. It is only a proof that your work is important and that for this reason it appears dangerous to the Social-Democrats. I am sorry that you must suffer calumny for this. But you must not lose heart nor give up the publication of your paper. Every number that I receive I read through with the greatest interest and pleasure. Your article upon anarchy I shall also have translated. It pleased me particularly. A few weeks ago I had begun a paper upon the simplest and most accessible means of redemption from the bondage in which we live, and this essay would have been precisely what you desire for your periodical. But now I am occupied with other labors. But as soon as I am done with these I shall complete this article with the keenest pleasure and send it to you for publication.

As to the international edition I have as yet begun nothing, but I have not given up the idea.

Your friend
LEO TOLSTOI

VII

October 28, 1895

DEAR FRIEND:

My friend Popov, the author of the biography of Drojin, asks me not to publish the foreword to his book which I sent you in my last letter through Makovizky. For this reason I repeat what I communicated in my telegram: Not to translate this article nor to publish it in your paper. The essay upon the Dukhobors you must have received by this time. The more this correspondence as well as my afterword is disseminated the better. I received your last letters. . . .

Your friend
LEO TOLSTOI

VIII

Moscow, December 18/30, 1895

DEAR FRIEND:

Please forgive me for not having written you for so long. I have received your book "The Secret of Christ" and then the latest number of the *Religion of the Spirit*. The form of the first-mentioned did not please me very much, but I am wholly in accord with you in the matter of your article Love Your Enemies.

As to the remarks of your Russian friend you may have these printed but not in my name nor in the name of the author of the correspondence about the Dukhobors. The success of your endeavors gives me great joy, although on such occasions I always think of St. Luke x, 20, where it is said that the disciples have not joy, etc.

It is so natural and dangerous to deceive ourselves, and indeed we are inclined to give undue importance to such happenings as seem desirable to us. And it is still more dangerous to attribute these to outer rather than to inner events and now, when I see how the truth is given the same recognition from all sides I remember this great saying.

Your friend
LEO TOLSTOI

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Labor Capitalism—Where Does It Lead?

By CEDRIC LONG

ORGANIZED labor is "buying into" capitalism. And capitalism, in turn, is energetically at the business of "taking labor into partnership." There is a strong movement toward the center from both directions; with the pace getting faster every year.

Scarcely a week passes without the news that organized labor is flirting with a new phase of capitalist finance. A new labor-trust company, a national labor bank, or an investment company is started. A union purchases a thirty-five million dollar office building or acquires a controlling interest in a mammoth Wall Street bank or a coal mine in West Virginia or forty-nine thousand acres of Florida real estate.

Meanwhile, on the extreme right we see efforts equally frantic. Statistics are marshaled to demonstrate that since 1918 public utilities alone have added three and a half million stockholders (including 500,000 employees) to their rolls and two and a half million bondholders. Huge corporations of every kind are seeking out bigger, better, and brighter methods for a wider and more democratic distribution of their stock. College professors, railroad presidents, and bankers vie with one another in quoting figures to prove that ownership and control of industry and finance are rapidly being transferred to the common men and women of the country.

Employee ownership of traction companies; labor partnership in railroad management; labor financiers; labor landlordism; labor capitalism—What is it? Where did it come from? Where is it going?

At first glance it would seem self-evident to those who distrust the system that if capitalism itself is a menace to society, labor capitalism or its counterpart, "democratic stock distribution," is no royal road to the Cooperative Commonwealth. These moves merely give us a broader and stronger foundation for the capitalist system; and economic democracy does not figure at all. Whether we happen to be residing on the left or on the right side of the road, once we fall in line behind this popular bandwagon we are enlisted in the campaign to see that capitalism is more firmly intrenched than ever in the economic life of the country.

For the main end and aim of that particular form of organization which we know as the capitalist corporation is to subordinate all the other interests of the economic order to the interests of the financial investor. The producers in industry take the fixed wage that is given them; the consumers pay the price that is assigned; the borrower pays the interest rate demanded; the tenant pays the rent set for him. But the profits, the surplus remaining after all expenses are paid, the rewards of business go to the stockholders, the investors. Possession of stock carries ownership, it conveys control, it commands the profits. And the owner of 10,000 shares gets ten thousand times the control and ten thousand times the profits returned to the owner of one share. Capitalism not only scorns the principle of equality as between stockholders, producers, and consumers; it scorns the equality principle between capitalists themselves. While the farmers and workers of the country think they are taking control of capitalism, in reality capitalism is taking control of them. Economic democracy under capitalism does not exist, nor can permanent justice for producers or consumers ever be born of it.

But let us be more specific. Here are a few concrete instances of capitalism at work:

The case of Standard Oil is already a classic, but it is worth citing again. Standard Oil of Indiana has this record:

Stock outstanding from 1892 to 1912 was worth $1,000,000.
In 1912 came a 2900 per cent stock dividend.
In 1920 came a 150 per cent stock dividend.
In 1921 came a 100 per cent stock dividend.

Thus, without a cent of new investment the original $1,000,000 increased to $150,000,000 through the pyramiding process of profits-to-capital. In addition to stock dividends the cash dividends declared between 1911 and 1924 were $125,248,969. In other words, every $100 invested before 1912 brought back to the investor within twelve years approximately $27,500.

So much for just one industrial corporation. Among distributive corporations the following is a typical example of capitalist accumulation. Kresge's five-and-ten-cent-stores company had 254 stores in 1924 and its sales were $90,-096,249. It is not necessary to list the various cash dividends declared. The stock dividends have been:

80 per cent in 1915
54 per cent in 1921
33½ per cent in 1923
50 per cent in 1925

The increase in capitalization from $2,000,000 preferred and $5,000,000 common in 1912 to $2,000,000 preferred and $36,791,899 common in 1925 took place with the addition of almost no new cash investment. In eight and three-quarters years the company has earned dividends of $40,-027,181, or 387.97 per cent on the $10,000,000 of common stock outstanding in 1918. (Kresge stock, to the best of our knowledge, is not being distributed widely among the consumers and employees of the stores.)

The Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company in its 12,000 grocery stores has annual sales of $350,000,000, and the profits last year were about $10,500,000, or nearly 800 per cent on the $1,250,000 common stock for the twelve months.

In these and hundreds of similar instances we see vast productive or distributive organizations built up out of the labor of the workers and the needs of the consumers with all the control and all the rewards in the hands of the owners of the capital.

What, then, are the alternatives to capitalism? Dr. Fosdick says he is in favor of the capitalist system because no workable alternative has yet appeared. A surprisingly large number of otherwise rather intelligent folks seem to agree with him; and most of the leaders of organized labor apparently have no quarrel with this point of view.

There is at least one form of economic organization in which the control and the distribution of the rewards are genuinely democratic, and it is an organization that works. The reason that so many Americans cannot see it is that they continue to think the rewards of any worth-while system must be in terms of interest and profits on investment. The test question is not Does it do the job? but Does it pay?

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When we talk about deflecting the rewards of industry to the workers we are accustomed to think in terms of the financial gains to be made from industry. When we talk of labor control of business we find ourselves thinking in terms of stock ownership. In brief our first need is for a new thought process with regard to economic affairs; mentally we must learn to subordinate the capital-stock control of a corporation to the more important elements of producers' labor and consumers' needs.

The genuine demand of labor for control in industry should be not for control of industry's profits but for the control of industry itself. Modern capitalist industry is only incidentally interested in production. Thus, capitalist business and the joint-stock corporation are not adapted to true control by either producers or consumers, for they are not designed for service. Real control of industry by these groups demands a new form of economic organization. Hence the futility of this stock-distribution movement.

The most effective alternative to capitalism is the economic form of organization known as Rochdale Cooperation, which does thus subordinate the capital element in industry to the labor and consumer element. There was evolved in England these eighty years ago a type of business institution which pays the minimum market price for capital just as it pays the minimum market price for any other tool, pig iron, coal, or freight cars; and it then devotes its main energies to production or distribution for use. It does, in most cases, issue shares of stock, but these are mere certificates of membership given in exchange for a loan of capital. They have no claim upon surplus or profits and they carry no extraordinary control power to the shareholders. Both control of policy and rights to the profits are vested in the producer or consumer in his capacity of producer or consumer and not in his capacity of investor. American workers have not yet learned to make this distinction.

An illustration. The British Canadian Cooperative Society, an organization of coal miners in Cape Breton, is eighteen years old. Its membership has risen from eighty-eight the first year to 2,767 in 1924. During these eighteen years the society has paid interest on the capital investment of stockholders at the rate of 4, 4½, or 5 per cent (after allotting each year something to the reserve fund); and the balance has been returned as patronage rebates. In 1924, for instance, the gross sales were $1,359,800; net earnings were $169,732.97; interest paid on capital was $12,391.64, and the amount returned to patrons in proportion to purchases was $153,425.33 (a 12 per cent savings-return). The totals for the eighteen years are:

Sales	$9,633,523.00
Net earnings	1,281,888.93
Interest on capital	84,484.31
Patronage rebates	1,167,386.87

Under a capitalist form of organization the investors and the patrons would probably have fared somewhat as follows during, for example, the years 1920 to 1924—after a similar amount had been put each year in the reserve fund:

Year	Dividend if paid on capital		Return to patrons
	Amount	Per cent	
1920	$154,237.97	83	0
1921	176,804.26	68	0
1922	156,933.53	72	0
1923	153,180.64	63	0
1924	165,816.97	65	0

Original capital in the beginning was only $1,710. The total return on this investment alone, had capitalist rules been substituted for cooperative, would have been several thousand per cent.

The Indian Orchard and Ludlow Cooperative Association in Massachusetts is another example of the cooperative division of "earnings to those who make earnings possible." It is not necessary to give the figures year by year. For the nineteen years this association has been in business the sales have been $2,058,785.80. Net earnings during the period have been $104,863.48, divided as follows:

Interest on Capital	$7,582.80
Reserves	12,163.28
Return to patrons	85,117.40

Whereas the return to stockholders has been 5 per cent each year, the annual amount returned to purchasers has usually exceeded the paid-in capital!

The point may be equally well illustrated in a producers' cooperative where the cooperators use their association for selling instead of for buying. The Farmers' Equity Cooperative Creamery Association of Orleans, Nebraska, is a simple illustration. Between early 1918 and June 30, 1925, the "profits" have been $186,382. This has been divided as follows:

Cash patronage refund to members	$44,000
"Stock dividend" (stock rebated in proportion to patronage)	67,000
Surplus and undivided earnings	75,382

The members of this cooperative have never received more than 3 per cent interest on their capital invested in shares of the association—or not more than (approximately) $10,000 during the seven years. The big "profits" went back to the same people in their capacity as producers. Had it been paid on investment, the return would have been somewhere between 400 per cent and 500 per cent.

The same principle holds true in the banking field. A large New York bank like the First National makes for its stockholders profits of 160 per cent from the traffic with the depositors and the borrowers. The cooperative bank, La Caisse Populaire, Quebec, started with a capital of $26 among wage workers, has done a business of more than $11,000,000 in twenty-two years without a single loss from a bad loan, and has never returned more than 6 per cent to the stockholders. The "money dividends" that might have enriched a few owners of the stock have become "service dividends" to the borrowers and depositors.

The liberals and radicals of the country, if they are to contribute to a sensible solution of our economic problems, must incorporate the cooperative principles of organization in their manner of handling the economic problem. For the creation of a democratic and cooperative economic order we do not need to wait for the total collapse of our capitalist system and the chaos which would result. But neither need we expect that in the marriage of modern capitalism and labor unionism is the cooperative commonwealth to be conceived and born. The technique for the control of industry and commerce cooperatively has been established these fourscore years and is gradually undermining and supplanting capitalism in all parts of the world.

We quote Professor Fred Hall, adviser of studies in the Cooperative Union of Great Britain and Ireland: "The cooperative position is that all the requisites of production should be owned by the community . . . so that the workers, as organizers of industry, would receive not merely the share of wealth which now goes to them as wages, but those shares of wealth produced which are now distributed as rent, interest, and profits."

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The Secret Sorrow of the White House

By FRANK R. KENT

Washington, January 30

THE little Massachusetts clique which hovers about the White House and constitutes the Coolidge inner guard or advisory board or Kitchen Cabinet or whatever you choose to call them has a secret sorrow. The cold, clammy hand of apprehension clutches their hearts these days. It isn't the tax bill or the farm problem or the World Court or the coal strike or railroad consolidation or the immigration question or the Aluminum case or anything of that sort about which they worry. As a matter of fact, I am credibly informed and believe subjects such as these are rarely touched upon between Mr. Coolidge and his New England intimates. For one thing he himself is not greatly interested or concerned about them and is content, as explained at yesterday's correspondents' conference, to take the judgment of Senator Curtis, the majority leader, on such strategic questions as the application of cloture, and of Senators Lenroot, Swanson, and others on World Court reservations, believing that they know best and having no particular convictions on them himself. That is in effect what the presidential spokesman said, although you were not supposed to make that deduction.

For another thing, these large legislative and departmental matters bother and bewilder good old Garibaldi Sargent and are not altogether clear to the devoted Stearns. Politics and appointments, the activities and attitude of the various persons suspected of presidential aspirations, whom next to invite to the White House, who can get the shoe vote in Massachusetts—these are more congenial topics. Besides, there is no use worrying about legislative problems. If you let them alone they will come out all right nine times out of ten anyhow. That is the basis of Calvin's whole political philosophy.

A much more serious matter is the question whether Bosom Friend Butler, Senator from Massachusetts, can be elected next fall. Now, that really is something worth worrying about—at least from the angle of the little White House group. And the thing that gives them most concern is the thing they most want to conceal—to wit, not only the complete absence of record made by the Bosom Friend since he entered the Senate more than a year ago but the absolutely barren prospect that he will do anything between now and next November calculated to win him votes.

The truth is Senator Butler faces a desperate fight. He may win, but his friends and supporters are scared stiff over the prospect, and the White House concern is based on the belief that the Butler defeat will not only be an individual disaster to him but a slap square in the eye for Calvin. Here are the facts: Massachusetts is Mr. Coolidge's own State. Senator Butler is his Bosom Friend, the manager of his campaign for the Presidency, the man he selected for chairman of the National Committee. Further, Senator Butler has but one issue—Mr. Coolidge. The only reason that can be given for returning him to the Senate is that he is Mr. Coolidge's friend, and a defeat for him would be a defeat for the President.

The danger, clearly perceived by the Coolidge group, is that failure of Senator Butler may start the presidential prestige and popularity, concededly a temporary and precarious asset, on the down grade. It would certainly be interpreted as a repudiation of Mr. Coolidge by the people of his own State, just as surely as the 1918 congressional elections were a repudiation of Wilson in the country. There could be no other interpretation. No wonder the little Coolidge group is worried. No wonder they deplore the inability of the Bosom Friend to help himself. No wonder they wish he did not have to lean so heavily and wholly on the President and that he did not have against him such a whirlwind, hard-hitting opponent as Dave Walsh.

The fact is that the good Butler is what might be termed a net loss as a campaigner. He is, of course, a man of integrity and character. He has all the small virtues, but he is about as jolly and genial and festive as an owl. A colder, frostier proposition in politics cannot now be recalled. Unquestionably he is an efficient business man, but when you say that you have said 90 per cent of what there is to say of Senator Butler. Neither as chairman of the National Committee nor as Senator has he distinguished himself. The seven million majority was due not in the least to him but to the Democrats, to La Follette, to the irresistible, unprecedented, unparalleled prosperity. One could not conceive of a man less well fitted to make an uphill fight with the odds against him and the money and weight on the other side. In the Senate it was supposed that the power of his position as head of the committee, plus an exclusive closeness to Mr. Coolidge would establish him as a real factor. It has done nothing of the sort. He has no influence in the Senate, no following, and has made no particular friends. He does not pass on the presidential orders or instructions from the President. For one reason, there are no such orders or instructions, and for another Republican Senators would not take them from Butler if there were. He has, since he has been in the Senate, made but one speech I can now recall and that was in defense of Warren, the jolly old beet-sugar king who came so close to being Attorney General. Everyone who heard the speech agreed it was zero in effectiveness and almost zero in substance. But after all it is not to be held against Mr. Butler that he is neither eloquent, brilliant, nor cordial in his manner. Lots of men and some Senators are like that. Yet people like them, and they are of use in legislation and politics.

The trait that distinguishes Butler from other wealthy business men who, in one way or another, have broken into the Senate and are making regular, unobtrusive, mediocre, and utterly unexciting machine members of that body is the stiff and narrow intolerance of his mind and the smug but unshakable conviction that all the righteous and patriotic people in the country are organization, high-tariff Republicans and that there is necessarily something low and degraded in those who are outside of that class. He is one of the most rigid and complete partisans there is in the Senate today. Those who know him best say he does not want to stay and that the waste of time, the lack of business methods, rasps him very much. If money and organization and federal patronage and the appeal to stand by and "uphold the hands of our splendid President," as the pious Pepper so often and so earnestly says, can pull him through he will win; because he has all those things. But if they are not enough, he will certainly lose—because he hasn't anything else—not a thing. And that is the secret sorrow of the inner White House circle.

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In the Driftway

"DRIFTY, my boy," writes a friend who still recalls a period of service at 20 Vesey Street and is accordingly impudent, "you are too provincial. You ought to come out to China. Those remarks of yours about the awkward, hot, constricting, and bulky clothing of the male, and your incidental references to the 'more decorative and sensible sex' —apparently referring to the female of the species Homo Americanus—betray a limited perspective. Your assumption that stiff hats and stiff collars, long trousers and hot coats are secondary sex characters because the benighted males of New York and London cling to them is as provincial as the disgust of the tourists who wander about Hangchow hungry because they can't find good American bread and milk or chop suey.

* * * * *

"COME out to this country of sartorial freedom, where the men wear skirts and the women trousers—or vice versa if they like. Take a look at a group of rickshaw boys and try to find constriction, heat, or bulk, or any principle of fashion expressed among them. Invite your lady friend who suspects men of fearing to expose their legs to look at these sturdy coolie shins—and bare brown coolie chests as well. Consider the individuality expressed in a coolie coat patched (quite literally) in seventeen different shades of blue. Note their trousers—some tied at the ankle, some tied at the knee, others cut off at any convenient length. Or watch the dignified gentry parading the street, with flowered silk trousers concealed beneath priestly robes, long and all-enveloping as a 1900 skirt. You will see sour-colored felt hats here, too, but also impressive skull-caps reminiscent of freshman days on the campus, and untrammeled by any hats at all the wind blows through a more fantastic variety of hair-cuts than decent Americans would think of tolerating—from brush cuts through grizzly forests of hair to coiled queues.

* * * * *

"AS for the ladies—if you are still incurably romantic, go to Japan. There the ladies really decorate the landscape—and can have little time left to do anything else. No statistician has yet computed the hours spent in rolling a Japanese obi about a shapely waist, or the ratio of cloth in a kimono to that in a 1925-length Western skirt. But as to the effect—if beauty determines, you will stay in the Orient and let the Western styles fade out of your unfortunate memory. Chinese women, to be sure, are more practical—most of them seem to wear whatever they happen to find lying about the house. Their baggy trousers would give pointers to a Princeton undergraduate; and Western pyjama designers would do well to study a batch of Chinese factory girls. And when the ultra-modern Chinese miss decides upon a skirt she refuses Western models and invents her own, which a mere man would hardly dare describe. In this year of grace her silk-slippered toe barely peeks from beneath the sweeping base-line.

* * * * *

"SHOES are another item in the catalogue of Oriental freedom. Those peekaboo feminine shoes now advertised in the home papers are obviously patterned after coolie footgear, which consist of a straw base bound to the foot by miscellaneous strings. Soft slippers are infinitely more graceful than the hard-heeled abominations of the West, and silk offers fairer possibilities than leather to the artist. And a Japanese shoe store full of painted and lacquered *geta* is a joy to the eye. Come out to the East, Drifter; forget the prison fashions of the West. You have been sitting still too long."

* * * * *

THE DRIFTER agrees it is high time that he be set drifting again. Unfortunately, the weather is too cold.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Crime and Capital Punishment

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In your issue of December 2 Judge Frederick Bausman attempts to uphold the institution of capital punishment in the United States on the ground that the application of this penalty in Great Britain has resulted in a substantial decrease of capital crimes. The chances of being hanged for a capital offense in this country, he tells us, "are very small." Were more "wilful persons" who "murder to get money" hanged, such crimes would soon be as infrequent here as in Northern Europe. Hence he favors not only retention of capital punishment in our codes but also its stricter application.

Now, it seems to me that Judge Bausman has here given a very strong argument in favor of legal abolition of capital punishment in this country. He admits that, as a matter of fact, only one out of 180 persons accused of murder in Cook County, Illinois, was actually hanged. Of what use, then, is this penalty, if convictions under its provision cannot be secured? American jurors are reluctant to bring in a verdict of guilty when the penalty to be inflicted is death. They are afraid of making a mistake—of condemning to death an innocent victim of the police force.

My records show that this fear is well founded. Such mistakes have occurred—just how many no one knows. If Judge Bausman will turn to Vol. XLIII, No. 3 (May-June, 1909) of the *American Law Review*, he will find that the first article deals with the question Does Capital Punishment Prevent Convictions? In answering this question in the affirmative, I presented ample evidence to prove conclusively that the menace of the death penalty tends more to protect the accused prisoner through intimidation of the jury than to protect society through its supposed deterrent effect upon would-be assassins. Subsequent research and observation have more than confirmed my views of 1909.

San Francisco, January 16 MAYNARD SHIPLEY

Ruff Enough

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I am a dirt farmer, in the wheat belt; find time to read a weekly during two of the winter months. In the issue of December 23 *The Nation* has two editorials and one article on taxation. When taxes are mentioned a farmer is all attention; he has a naked nerve that has been touched by a scalpel. In your federal-tax editorial the farmer is mentioned several times—something rare even in high-brow journalism. So, should an archaeologist two thousand years hence delve diligently among the remains, he probably would discover that in our time there was not altogether missing such a class as farmers.

The editorial entitled The Menace of Education discusses higher education, which of course is maintained by State taxes. Mr. Hind is right. We are merely running hobo factories with our present methods of higher education; the output is either hobos or 100 per centers.

Why should a farmer, whose sense of independence, indi-

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viduality, self-reliance, and self-respect has long ago been destroyed by the war to make the world safe for democracy, by the war to end war, be compelled to work sixteen hours a day, sixteen hours of unremunerative and strength-exhausting hard labor, in order to gain a bare, precarious, and barbarous existence for the primary purpose of keeping hobo factories running? Oh, I enjoyed the keen and cutting satire in all three articles; in fact, I rolled to the floor of my cabin convulsed by laughter. But——

My State and county taxes are something like $1,100 per year. By far the largest item is education. I am, like other farmers, unable to pay such a senseless tax. Often our entire gross farm receipts do not amount to the sum of these taxes. Now, where is a dirt farmer ever appointed to any board of regents, or any other managerial or administrative office? Why is this? Why should he slave for what are to him parasitical institutions? Perhaps our law-and-order apostles have him hogtied. Talk about bolshevism in Russia—its confiscation of property—is nauseous. It is the camouflage of our smirky and cowardly Republican and Democratic party politicians while they are confiscating our property with vengeance, confiscation of homes via taxation. It is this higher education that doesn't educate, our economic blockade otherwise known as the Fordney tariff schedules, and the embargo on immigration that has paralyzed the farmer.

When the farmer's sons reach puberty they are off to the cities where larger wages are paid, not for sixteen hours' work but eight hours'. They need not be like their father, hopelessly in debt; they can lay by considerable sums and have time for reading or other recreation. This reduces the help on the farm to the old men and their wives and small children and culls not wanted in the cities to carry on the despairing struggle to retain their homes.

Ruff, Washington, December 26 FRANK HINKHOUSE

War Atrocities

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Has any historian attempted a full collection of the atrocity stories sent out by the propaganda bureaus during the late war? It seems to me that a judicious selection of these horrific yarns would have permanent value.

My attention has been directed to this question by reading of the effects of one such story upon members of the Cabinet in the critical days just before the United States entered the war. It appears in the letters of Franklin K. Lane (page 239) in a letter to his brother on February 25, 1917:

> Washington, February 25, 1917
>
> My dear George: On Friday we had one of the most animated sessions of the Cabinet that I suppose has ever been held under this or any other President. It all arose out of a very innocent question of mine as to whether it was true that the wives of American consuls on leaving Germany had been stripped naked, given an acid bath to detect writing on their flesh, and subjected to other indignities. Lansing answered that it was true. Then I asked Houston about the bread riots in New York, as to whether there was shortage of food because of car shortage due to vessels not going out with exports. This led to a discussion of the great problem which we all had been afraid to raise, Why shouldn't we send our ships out with guns or convoys? Daniels said we must not convoy—that would be dangerous. (Think of a Secretary of the Navy talking of danger!) The President said that the country was not willing that we should take any risks of war. I said that I got no such sentiment out of the country, but if the country knew that our consuls' wives had been treated so outrageously that there would be no question as to the sentiment. This, the President took as a suggestion that we should work up a propaganda of hatred against Germany. Of course, I said I had no such idea, but that I felt that in a democracy the people were entitled to know the facts. McAdoo, Houston, and Redfield joined me. The President turned on them bitterly, especially on McAdoo, and reproached all of us with appealing to the spirit of the Code Duello. We couldn't get the idea out of his head that we were bent on pushing the country into war. Houston talked of resigning after the meeting. McAdoo will—within a year, I believe. I tried to smooth them down by recalling our past experiences with the President. We have had to push, and push, and push, to get him to take any forward step—the Trade Commission, the Tariff Commission. He comes out right but he is slower than a glacier—and things are mighty disagreeable whenever anything has to be done.

The above letter is interesting for several reasons. It appears to negative the opinion, popular in some circles, that Mr. Wilson had desired war long before the opportunity came to make his feelings public. The story also gives a new view as to what our Cabinet really went to war about! If the acid-bath story was as baseless as one is inclined to suppose in the light of our present knowledge of war propaganda, it ought to make a valuable footnote in the story of the war propaganda and of the incredible naivete of our own public officials.

Cleveland, November 23 M. C. HARRISON

"The Only Pure Race"

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In his letter in *The Nation* of January 20 Mr. Godkin makes the claim that the Jews are "the only pure race." This is an error. In his book, "The Races of Europe," Professor Ripley has shown that in the ninth century Jewish traders converted whole Slavic tribes in southern Russia to their faith. The great numbers of Jews in Russia and Poland are due to these conversions. If there are any pure Jews they live in Algeria and Tripoli. With their regular features, their oval faces, olive complexion, black hair, and black eyes they recall the ancient Jews. In Europe there are no pure races, not even in Scandinavia, where the "Nordics" are said to have come from.

That there is an anti-Jewish spirit in America cannot be denied. Whenever a racial group in any country refuses to mix with the whole mass of people it acts as a foreign body in the social organisms and causes irritation. The Jews may consider it wrong freely to intermarry with other creeds, but as long as they do so they will arouse enmity. In the light of modern thought and ideals this is wrong, but it is a reality.

Washington, January 20 A. A.

Important if True

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR:

All hail, great Champion! Every righteous Cause
has found you eager to accept the gage
flung by the Jousters of a cynic Age,
and ever alert to pierce their armor's flaws!

You have upheld the Tournament's just Laws,
have dared the adversaries' insulting rage.
O incorruptible, calm, shrewd, and sage:
for you now rings the World's deep-voiced applause!

All hail, staunch Champion of the Truth, the Right!
Defender of Liberty and Justice, hail!
Keep on unwearied in the gallant fight!

Let not your courage or your vigilance fail!
In spite of vicious blows your shield is bright—
bright as the dazzling symbol of the Grail!

NATHAN HASKELL DOLE

Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, January 7

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International Relations Section

Intrigue in the Middle East

By ALBIN E. JOHNSON

PARADOXICALLY, the very "ideal" which caused Syria to revolt, the force that raised the standard of Abd-el-Krim across North Africa, that almost brought the British to grief in Egypt (and may yet do so), that aided Kemal to rally his disorganized Turks when all seemed lost, and that spattered village streets in India with blood not long ago, namely, Woodrow Wilson's enunciation of the urge for self-determination and equality, has temporarily thwarted the nationalistic aspirations of various Moslem peoples. Had the uprisings been localized or had they occurred at different times in the different European zones of influence, the diplomatic forces of the exploiting Powers might not have been united. The almost simultaneous disturbances—from the Riff to Mesopotamia—confronted Europe with a smoldering Islam which recalled the Crusades. France, England, Italy—never sympathetic to one another's imperial aspirations—realized that loss of prestige to any one of them meant a gain in morale to the enemy of all three. A Turkish victory in Mosul would have brought joy to malcontents in India; gains by the Egyptian Zaghlulists heartened the hard-pressed Riffians and the battered Syrians, while Ibn Sa'ud's triumphs in Mecca, Medina, and Jeddah reechoed in prayers from mosques and minarets all over the East. Ordinarily as disunited as the countries of Europe in pre-war days, the tribes of the desert and dwellers in the Jebel also are beginning to realize that in union there is strength and that their common exploiter is the European. European chancelleries know the same thing—and that is why the odds against Syria are overwhelming and the Arabs—for the moment—simply have to lose.

Briefly recapitulated, the history of Syria shows French influence began about 1860, when as a result of the massacre of some 6,000 Christians the French occupied Damascus and assumed the responsibility of "protector of the Church." A year later Lebanon was placed under the control of six European Powers with a Christian governor. From that time until the Great War priority of French interests was generally recognized.

In 1915, anxious to use the tribesmen against the Turks, the Allies nurtured Arab nationalism and made agreements with Sherif Hussein of Mecca and a commission representing the Arabs of Damascus, Aleppo, and Mosul. Invaluable service was rendered to the Allied cause and Turkey's defeat was due largely to the campaigning of the Hejaz tribesmen. And, ironically, as a result the almost primitive community of Hejaz secured its independence, while the far more advanced and civilized Arabs of Syria, Palestine, and Lebanon have had their nationalistic aspirations bloodily suppressed. In fact, Syria today enjoys a smaller measure of self-government than it did under Turkish sovereignty.

In 1918 Britain and France jointly made a declaration assuring the Arabs that they had no intention of subjugating them, but rather would liberate them from the Turkish yoke and "help them establish national administrations which shall derive their authority from the invitation and free will of the people themselves." Then, in order to reconcile their recognition of Arab self-determination with opportunist and imperialistic policies, "all the diplomatic ingenuity of foreign offices was brought into play," in secret treaties between the British and French, and subsequently in the difficult drafting of "A" Mandates. Theoretically, the League became responsible for the supervising of the execution of these mandatory trusts. Actually, the territories were placed under British and French tutelage for an unspecified time and subject to powers as ample as if the zones in question were literally colonies or protectorates.

Stamping out the Druse rebellion in Syria was not a difficult thing, once the French had determined upon a line of action and overcome internal differences. The bombardment of Damascus marked the turn against the rebels. But stifling the nationalistic aspirations of the Arabs is another thing. To assure permanent penetration, economically and otherwise, the malcontents either had to be brought into line or eliminated. To the Powers in Syria this task was intrusted; to spokesmen at Geneva fell the task of squaring policies with the League and ex-Allied Powers.

At the December session of the League Council—and the meeting of the Permanent Mandate Commission just preceding it—several interesting things occurred, of no obvious significance to casual observers, but important to those who can lift the veil and look behind the scenes.

Britain and Turkey were facing conclusions over Mosul. France was on the grill of public opinion because of alleged irregularities in Syria. Italy, whose troops had just wiped out a native village in Somaliland in retaliation for the death of two soldiers, was determined in the words of Benito Mussolini to "widen its penetration and extend its power . . . by virile conduct, combative if need be," and stood on the fence ready for any deals.

For more than a year Turkey, presumably single handed, had refused Britain's demands for additional potential oil territory in Mosul. Back of her had stood France, using, in accordance with Franklin-Boullion's agreement with Angora, all the diplomatic pressure at her disposal to defeat England's claims. With a deadlock in the Council's sub-committee and France's friendly support, Turkey's chances of success were good. But down in the Jebel Druse country things were happening. The anti-French revolt had assumed serious proportions. Tribes throughout the Lebanon were rebelling. French losses had exceeded 7,000 dead and missing. Damascus fell, was bombarded, and recaptured. An official envoy of the Syrians appeared in Angora. He sought arms and unofficial aid. Every minister except Mustapha Kemal was approached, and from all he received information of the Franco-Turk pledge: For aid in Mosul Turkey had promised neutrality as to Syria. Turkey, aping the diplomats of Europe, was trying to play both ends against the middle, little realizing, however, that color, geography, and religion made her role impossible.

So the Syrian repaired to Geneva, where for France things had taken on an alarming aspect. From various sources came protests and charges regarding the French administration of the mandate. Neutral members of the League looked askance; Arab organizations in Egypt, Transjordania, Mesopotamia, and Palestine, as well as the Syrians themselves, demanded an impartial investigation. Even Paris, tacitly admitting that all was not well, sacrificed General Sarrail on the pyres of her own public opinion.

Henry de Jouvenel, exponent of the Mandate System, and in good standing in League Circles, was designated as new high commissioner. Theoretically he was given carte blanche to undo Sarrail's alleged errors and to seek temporarily at least to placate the rebellious tribesmen. M. Paul-

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Boncour came to Geneva. M. de Jouvenel went to London.

To cope successfully with the situation it was necessary to reach an understanding with the British. The rebel territory reached to the Palestine boundary. Cairo, a hotbed of intrigue, was but twelve hours away. So in London de Jouvenel did the unheard-of thing—he outlined France's policy toward Syria. "The time has come," he said, "when countries having contiguous interests in the Middle East can no longer act without informing one another of their policies."

A fortnight later—at Geneva—Mosul was awarded to Britain. Bewildered, the Turkish Foreign Minister, Tewfik Rushdy Bey, made two separate trips to Paris within three days. Strangely enough, he failed to see M. Briand. But he saw M. Chicherin—and took back to Angora instead of the Mosul the double-edged alliance with Turkey's age-old enemy, Russia.

Britain got Mosul! What did France get . . . and Italy?

During the fortnight the Council was in session Ihsan el Djabri Bey, spokesman of the Syrians, hammered at the portals of the League. Armed with damning documents he sought to present them to the Council; to demand an immediate investigation into affairs in the mandated zone. Citing atrocity after atrocity—by Senegalese, Circassian, and Algerian troops—and backing his charges with figures, names, dates, and places, he gained the ear of M. Scialoja, Italian, president of the Council.

"Wait and see!" was Scialoja's only comment to the appeal for action. M. Ishii, taciturn delegate of Japan, listened politely. What he said to Ihsan el Djabri remains confidential. Japan is not interested in the Middle East—but the Orient. Sir Eric Drummond volunteered that there was a recognized method of procedure, through the Permanent Mandates Commission. Marquis Theodoli, president of the Mandates Commission, was in Geneva. But his suggestion was come to Rome—in February. Until then France had a free hand in Syria, with instructions to maintain order. Balked at every turn, the Syrian appealed in vain. The door of the League, "protector of mandates," was closed.

Under the instructions of the League, France's duties as a mandatory Power are, as stated above, to "maintain order." She also is instructed to frame an "organic law" for Syria before September 29, 1926. When the commission met in October to hear her report—after three years—Paris was not ready. Emir Chekibe Arslan, envoy of the Syrians and Palestine, then demanded an investigation. The commission decided to postpone hearing France's case until February, in Rome.

The Emir protested, first against the delay and second against a meeting in Rome. The fight against postponement received no consideration. The opposition to a hearing in Rome did. According to the minutes, just made available, Sir Francis Lugard, Briton, insisted that "doubts had been expressed as to the advisability of discussing Syrian affairs in the center of the Catholic world." M. Rappard, Swiss, urged that the commission, "like Caesar's wife, should be above suspicion." The chairman, a Roman, and the rest of the commission overruled them. The Council, then in session in Paris on the Greek-Bulgar affair, upheld the decision.

That the atmosphere of Rome would in any way affect the results of the Syrian hearing is doubtful. The wheels of diplomacy run just as smoothly in all continental quarters. But, nevertheless, it is significant that two members of the commission, one a British delegate, should have voiced disapproval. Furthermore, Italy has interests in North Africa. Her dream of empire might be said to include at least a corridor from Algiers to Somaliland. Even Smyrna is mentioned as a desideratum. Besides, the Moslems of Ras Hafoun must not be allowed to lose respect for European prestige.

Events move slowly in the Middle East. Might still makes right—consequently order will be restored in Syria. The League's Mandate Commission will hear in February that the dove of peace is flying over Damascus and out in the deserts and in the Jebel ranges bands of guerrillas will keep the embers of nationalism burning.

NOTE.—In Arabia, after the war, Britain placed Hussein on the throne. His sons, Abdullah and Feisal, were respectively made rulers over Transjordania and Mesopotamia. Simultaneously, the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office were supporting both Hussein and Ibn Sa'ud, chief of the Wahabis. Hussein has fallen, Ibn Sa'ud is in control of Arabia. The *Morning Post*, December 1, 1925, reported that Sir Gilbert Clayton has concluded a treaty with Ibn Sa'ud whereby Britain is to recognize him and contribute $1,000,000 a year to support his army. Hussein and his son Ali, who succeeded him, pass into discard.

Contributors to This Issue

CEDRIC LONG is executive secretary of the Cooperative League of America.

FRANK R. KENT, vice-president of the Baltimore *Sun*, is sending *The Nation* biweekly letters from Washington.

HENDRIK VAN LOON wrote and illustrated "The Story of Mankind," "The Story of the Bible," and "Tolerance."

ALBIN E. JOHNSON is a journalist living in Geneva.

BABETTE DEUTSCH has published two volumes of poetry: "Banners" and "Honey Out of the Rock."

EDWIN MUIR wrote the article Women—Free for What? in *The Nation's* series, New Morals for Old.

FLOYD DELL was one of the editors of the *Masses* and the *Liberator*. Among his novels are "Moon-Calf" and "Runaway."

WALTER JAMES SHEPARD is on the faculty of the Robert Brookings Graduate School of Economics and Government.

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HENRY W. NEVINSON'S latest book is "More Changes, More Chances."

H. L. MENCKEN is editor of the *American Mercury* and a contributing editor of *The Nation*.

JOSEPH JASTROW is professor of psychology at the University of Wisconsin.

EDWIN E. SLOSSON is the director of Science Service.

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THOMAS MUNRO is on the staff of the Barnes Foundation at Merion, Pennsylvania.

ALLEN TATE was editor of the *Fugitive*, a magazine of verse published at Nashville, Tennessee.

HENRIETTA STRAUS has recently returned from Sweden with the manuscript of a new book.

NOTE: *The Nation* was mistaken in referring to Miss Dorothy Thompson as head of the European service of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*. She is the *Ledger* correspondent for Berlin and Central Europe.

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The Nation's Prize Poem for 1926

Thoughts at the Year's End

By BABETTE DEUTSCH

Draw a clean breath of crisp and moonless air;
Fix eyes upon the dark;
set ears to catch
the knocking of the wind along the ground,
whereto no grass replies, being numb as wire.
The traveling clock you carry everywhere
about with you, the jewel of your bones,
ticks with too little sound,
keeping the time no other soul may share,
making you know
here's night, here's winter, here's year's end
to bear
once more,
and without a god's help, now,
without a devil, and without desire.

O happy Egypt! O most eloquent stones,
heaped like a hill of thunder, frescoed in gold
and black and rusted vermilion,
to comfort a god, the son of the Sun, with riches.
O wise embalmers'
bandages tightly wound, to keep the dignity of the Pharaoh's bones
unbitten by any tooth, save, it may be,
the envy of a slave.
O black marble nostrils, spread like wings,
squat dark doorways
open to eternal life.
We come upon you, fifty centuries having passed,
we, the sorrowful heirs and assigns
of your grave-treasure, your bread, your heart, your rings,
buried with you—
we remember, O son of the Sun,
that even the first Father, shining
on the Moskva as on the Rhein, the Seine as on the Thames, the Hudson
as on old Nile—
even the Sun is doomed,
and dooms us in a little while.

In His eyes
two thousand years are as a moment.
Now at the winter solstice, when the light is squeezed
like a drop of watery chrome on the faded earth,
to be lapped up by a brumous blotter of darkness,
does He remember
the long December night through which the chosen
virgin labored to bring
peace to the people?
(Sing:
holy, holy, holy,
Lord God almighty!)
He endured much—
the kiss of betrayal,
the heavy way up the hard hill,
the ropes, the nails, the spear,
the death agony, the slow, long rending, most the mockery
He cast upon Himself when He cried out,
"Elohai, Elohai, lama sabachthani?"
That moment is over.
And we, who have seen His peace
shredded by Huns and Romans, priests and kings, rich men and rabble,
we whom He could not save
(Himself He could not save)
now watch the wintry dark as a sick seaman watches
his coldly tossing grave.

But who are we
that we should envy the Pharaoh,
the Keeper of the House, who built his house forever,
or that we
should rate the God of the Hebrews, One and Eternal,
because He turned into a Trinity, and, soon thereafter, ceased?
We are so small
the fleas that crawled over behemoth bulked
larger to that huge pasture than we to the stars,
and to the night the blinking stars are less
than fireflies to the whole wilderness.
O vanity
of man! that would spin Cosmos out of a small gray clot
locked in a fragile shell.
Say: God is not.
Say: man dies,
every man, alone
(bite on this iron at midnight, when you lie
sleepless, in bed, with half a life gone by, eaten away—
the day
will be undone,
love and ambition be ashy on your tongue,
and oblivion
will roll its weight over upon you, ton and giant ton).
Say: God is not, death's instant, history's
a fever the moon died of—
what way now?
There's no help in the hills, for they will crumble,
nor in the skies, for earth is a dropped stitch
in their pattern
(but even to fumble, there must be Fingers,
and for a pattern—Mind) . . .

Reach out, reach out, you will touch nothing,
you will find
nothing,
but yet reach,

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with the balked pressure of the blind on emptiness,
reach, grope, seize, shape.
Or, let the ice-blue winding-sheet
that waits for earth
swaddle your infant wisdom at the birth,
or, from the cracked bones of despair
suck marrow,
and bend Now
backward and forward in your spirit's heat.
And bear . . . and bear . . .

From more than three thousand poems submitted in The Nation's *annual poetry contest the editors have chosen "Thoughts at the Year's End," by Babette Deutsch, to receive the first prize of $100. But they were so much pleased by Leonora Speyer's "Ballad of Old Doc Higgins," which follows next week, that they have decided to award it a second prize of $50. They wish also to give honorable mention to John Gould Fletcher, Genevieve Taggard, and Laurence Jordan.*

Aldous Huxley*

By EDWIN MUIR

IT is about five years since Mr. Huxley first became known to the public. A small volume of verse, "The Defeat of Youth," had appeared before that, but it did not arouse much attention. "Limbo" did; and since its appearance Mr. Huxley has written eight books, comprising novels, short stories, a poem, and two volumes of essays. Productiveness such as this is unusual, but as remarkable as Mr. Huxley's industry has been his popularity. Most of his books have run into a third impression; even his essays and his poems have been read. No other writer of our time has built up a serious reputation so rapidly and so surely; compared with his rise to acceptance that of Mr. Lawrence or Mr. Eliot has been gradual, almost painful. Mr. Huxley's public capitulated almost at the first stroke of his pen, and they have been docile ever since. They have found in his work less a point of view than an affinity; they are as delighted with what he says as if a part of themselves, a part of themselves weary of humbug and the burdens it imposes, were saying it. To all those in difficulties, to everybody, in short, a profound sense of relief is given if they are told at the right moment that what they take to be their soul is in reality their liver. The relief is great because the problem is at once simplified and its dimensions sensibly reduced. Mr. Huxley has been telling us in a variety of ways that it is our liver. It is a hit-or-miss diagnosis, as true, perhaps, as M. Coué's, but as one-sided, and essentially of the same order. It is also a peculiarly English kind of truth, for nowhere are prejudices and crotchets more really respected than in England.

But of the many writers who are saying that it is our liver no one says it so gracefully, so passionately, almost so entrancingly, as Mr. Huxley. Other writers of his generation, indeed most of them, have been disposed to reduce emotions, ideals, sentimentalities to their elements, but no one else has done it so effectively and so amusingly. Mr. Huxley is so effective partly because he has the power of disengaging his mind as if it were an impersonal instrument and letting it operate a little diabolically for its own purposes; but partly because that mind is never too complex for the immediate task, the pricking of an illusion. It does what it sets out to do; it desires to do no more; it is extraordinarily effective and completely without nuance. The style which is its instrument is agreeable, lively, continuously graceful, but it seldom attempts anything that would be likely to strain its powers. Effectiveness, then, Mr. Huxley has in a striking degree. He has a complete grasp of ways and means; he is seldom in difficulties; he excels with ease in every form he sets his hand to. But all this, one feels, is achieved at the expense of something complex, immediate, and essential, for which he does not seem to have striven. His style is supple, natural, felicitous, but he has never expressed in it a profound truth, nor described with it a living character. And if it be asked why he should have done so, the reply is that he has written novels, and in them has been perpetually obsessed by certain types and by the philosophical problems their lives present. He has called forth these types and these problems; he has written a great deal about them; but he has never really dealt with them.

He has not done so because beneath all his freedom, his engaging licentiousness, of intellect, there persists a certain conventionality, a certain banality. In "Those Barren Leaves" he presents the figure of a meretricious, unhappy, middle-aged woman who thinks she is in love with a young poet. For the imagination a figure such as this held endless possibilities, and Mr. Huxley had the opportunity of exploiting them and of revealing Mrs. Aldwinkle's soul. This, however, he never attempted. He portrays Mrs. Aldwinkle simply as a nuisance; the reaction of his imagination to her, in short, is the same as the reaction of one of her own set might be. And as he deals with Mrs. Aldwinkle he deals with almost all his characters. His art is not one of comprehension; it is one of exposure. He is content—and it is a sign of a certain naivete of mind—if he succeeds in stripping the make-believe from people. In "Antic Hay" Gumbril, Lypiatt, Mercaptan, the egregious Rosie are all stripped of their hypocrisies; but we are given no inkling of the sources from which these hypocrisies spring. Mr. Huxley dislikes them with a fury which might be that of a moralist, but is not; but the obvious truth is that he has not tried to understand them. For him they might be completely arbitrary, and spring from no cause more particular than the general turpitude of the human race. Because people are one thing and appear another, as they have always done and for their self-preservation must always do, he is enraged. But the objects of his indignation are nothing less than the laws of adaptation, the conditions of civilized existence, the attributes of human nature. All this makes Mr. Huxley as a novelist, as a portrayer of actual men and women, extraordinarily limited; but it makes him as a satirist sometimes very penetrating. Not seeing complexities he cannot be deceived by them; and he maintains therefore through thick and thin, through

* This is the seventh of a series of articles by Mr. Muir dealing with those younger authors of today who are in the process of becoming established. Essays have appeared on D. H. Lawrence, Edith Sitwell, Lytton Strachey, T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, and Stephen Hudson.

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everything perhaps but romantic love, his hold upon the ineradicable hypocrisy of the human race.

Yet often one is puzzled to tell why he does so. It is not because he is openly on the side of virtue, nor is it because he is fascinated, as Baudelaire was, by evil. He has the moral rage, without the morality, of a satirist; and although the effect is unintentional, sometimes he gives the impression of sitting on the fence, of a little irresolutely trying to make the worst of both worlds. We see him pursuing the perfectly worthless but also perfectly inoffensive Rosie through "Antic Hay" with an inexplicable hostility in which there is a complete lack of moral purpose. Why should he do so? Obviously it is because his satire is not a criticism of hypocrisy but a reaction to it. He does not set out to show hypocrisy in its essence and to trace its results, as he would be bound to do if he saw it objectively; he simply sets it down as an object of his dislike. He reacts to it in his characters; he reacts to it, also, in himself. This is a kind of honesty which is rare; but it is one which at the same time is in tune with this age and representative of it. It is not essentially discerning; it is content to convict us of the venial sins and to take a certain pleasure in thus humiliating us. It is an honesty to certain immediate reactions each of which is apprehended in a desert of banality, in the perfect waste left by the disappearance of conceptions, ideals, orders, which were accepted by other ages. It is so faithful to the immediate reactions that it does not permit one to seek for their causes. And so, if there is no philosophy, no attempt to account for the world in general, in Mr. Huxley's books, neither is there any psychology. And, curiously enough, it is this that makes him such a perfect representative of one current of feeling of the age. For the crash of an order which was preparing before the war, and which the war precipitated, does seem to have left a generation who in their universal uncertainty doubt even such terms as the world and the mind, are skeptical of any conclusions which may be drawn from the existence of these things, and are prepared to accept only the sensations they feel and the deceptions practiced by everybody to conceal them. No contemporary writer has portrayed these sensations and seen through these deceptions more clearly than Mr. Huxley. He fills the scene completely, and what is as essential, he does no more than fill it. There could not be, in short, a more perfect example of the writer of transition.

To be so completely of the period, to say unerringly what nine out of ten literate people wish to be said, finally to say it gracefully and wittily—this is in a sense its own reward, this is at the same time to be of service to one's generation if not to posterity. The writer who can do it must have talents of a high order; but he must also have definite limitations, must share as much in the blindness as in the knowledge of his time. He must see just what his contemporaries see—see it with no less knowledge, but also with no more profundity. He must never lift a veil; from appearance he must rather present everything in such a way that it has merely to be recognized. He must share without afterthought the taste of the age; he must be as transitory, as one-sided, as limited, as blind as it. He must be all this, for this is the penalty exacted in exchange for the glance of immediate recognition, of instinctive sympathy, which his work provokes. And if we take almost any scene from Mr. Huxley's novels we can see how exactly these requirements are fulfilled, how completely these limitations are observed. His presentation of the histrionic Lypiatt, the unsuccessful artist who has to talk loud to deceive himself, is a fair example of Mr. Huxley's methods, and how telling it is, but how perfectly on the surface, how crude even! The essential point in the passage is that Lypiatt is not for a moment understood; if he were, another kind of satire would be necessary to do justice to him. He is not a human being with innumerable interests, with many masks, and with a past to explain them. He is rather one set of interests only, one mask only, which has no existence before and after his appearance in the book. His life begins at forty and continues for a few weeks; apart from these he is a perfect blank, an inexplicable void. We are given in Mr. Huxley's stories a succession of impressions of people we have never met before, with whom we never become intimate, and who are never explained. Their author tears their masks from them, but there is nothing beneath. The prolonged scrutiny which would discern complexity in these figures and would thus humanize them—Mr. Huxley never casts it in their direction. He is completely in the present, and he finds it exciting, exasperating, amusing. The humors, the lusts, the hypocrisies, the snobberies—he discovers them all there, and he portrays them. But they remain disembodied. They are not qualities belonging to specific characters and colored by that fact; they are general attributes of human nature.

All this makes Mr. Huxley as a novelist a very unsatisfying, almost an incongruous figure. We feel there is no necessity why he should have chosen the novel rather than another form for what he has to say. It provides him with a loose frame for his intellectual fantasies; in that frame his ideas are more piquant, perhaps, than they would be without it. But it is an improvisation, not a form; it has a utilitarian but not an aesthetic reason for existing. And in choosing it Mr. Huxley has certainly lost more than he has gained. For the fantastic little essays and dialogues—"the delicious little middles"—for which his stories are chiefly read lose a great deal by being put in the mouths of people whom we find shoddy, ill-made, second-rate, and in any case much less interesting than their author himself, who is in reality speaking. Mr. Huxley's work consists essentially in a running argument, sometimes ingenuous, sometimes ironical, with himself. But he interposes between us and this interesting dispute his Gumbrils, Lypiatts, Mercaptans, and worse; and they are tiresome; they stand between us and the theme, they make the author's utterance one degree more false. Unfortunately there is no getting over the bad effects of an error of this kind. Mistakes in the choice of form are fatal; they spring either from a lack of artistic conscience or from a debility of imagination; and in either case the writer, unable to see how things will work out, is inevitably driven to mere improvisation. Mr. Huxley has intelligence, fancy, and wit, but little imagination; and he has chosen the prose form in which imagination is most indispensable. When he resigns it for the purely fantastic, the purely intellectual, as in the short story of the dwarf in "Chrome Yellow," we feel immediately that his talents are heightened and that his work becomes original and serious. For in that story his intellectual fancy is not a delightful irrelevance, as it is in his novels; it is an animating principle. There he found a form which suited his gifts. He has found it once; he may yet achieve something large in it. As it is, it outweighs everything else he has written, and is the best criticism that exists of the remainder of his work.

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They Wanted to Tell*

By FLOYD DELL

A FEATURE of American life which has impressed me more, I think, than any other, and which has certainly had something to do with my career as a writer, is one of which American fiction scarcely gives any indication. Novels sometimes deal with the lives of those sensitive young people who ultimately either succeed or fail in expressing themselves in an art; and such novels almost invariably represent these young lives as being spent in endless and exasperating conflict with the huge alien forces of industrialism or conventionality; these young artists are always shown as terribly lonely, and utterly unguided or misguided—and the stultification, partial or complete, which usually overtakes them is blamed, perhaps rightly enough, on that environment. This I have noted as characteristic not only of such fiction but of a good deal of contemporary criticism. I have wondered about it. This unhappy state of affairs may, as a matter of fact, be generally true; I can only testify that I have not found it so.

Taking myself as one of those sensitive young people who were destined ultimately to succeed or fail in an art, I seem to have always been recognized as such a person. No ruthless endeavors were made to fit me as a square peg into a round hole; and my youthful efforts, on the score of making a living, to fit my angularity into various round holes, while arousing some incidental astonishment and impatience by their ineptitude, met also with far more tolerance than anyone would ever guess from reading the novels and criticisms of which I have spoken. It seems to me, though I confess I did not think so at the time, that my various employers displayed upon the whole a Christlike patience toward my youthful clumsiness, absent-mindedness, and general incompetence. Eventually they fired me, to be sure; but I can hardly regret that I was not afforded more encouragement to become a harness-maker, a candy-maker, or an elevator-boy, to name only a few of the heights to which I might have climbed if my employers' patience had held out long enough.

In a sense it was made inevitable that I should become a writer by my gradual expulsion at an early age from most of the other available ways of making a living. I do not credit my employers with firing me out of sheer disinterested and far-seeing benevolence (though some of them, it is true, told me in puzzled tones that I was a bright lad, in my way, and would doubtless get along all right at something else!)—but at all events there was no brutal endeavor to turn me into a captain of industry. To be sure, I had the incomparable advantage of being the son of a poor family; my father could mildly suggest to me that I ought to go to a business college, but I could cheerfully disregard his suggestion, with no hard feelings on either side. Perhaps the social tyranny of which so much is heard today really refers to worried middle-class parental efforts on behalf of young people who, on the other hand, are anxious to be out of the nest—an economic aspect of the well-known father-complex! Be that as it may, I did not suffer from the respectable commercial compulsions which are supposed to be inflicted upon all American youth. No one so much as lifted a finger to prevent my becoming an artist.

On the other hand, well-meaning efforts were sometimes made to assist me in my career. I remember how, my ambitions being discovered by some of the good people of the town where I lived, there was a plan afoot to take me from my factory job and give me an education; and I was invited to dinner to meet a man whose philanthropies took the form of sending deserving lads through college. The conversation after dinner turned upon college; and I, unwitting of the plan, spoiled it—as I afterward learned—by scornfully denouncing college as a waste of time for one who, like me, was able to think for himself; such a one, I declared, could get a better education at the public library and the Socialist local than at any college in America! Which I was thereupon permitted to prove.

But these are not the recognitions and encouragements of which I wish to speak. It is another sort that moves my devout gratitude. Being taken from the first as the sort of person I was, I found a succession of older people who gave me the only help which I can conceive as being really worth having. In the first place they accepted me, a raw boy, as a fellow-enthusiast in all sorts of intellectual and idealistic concerns; they ignored the gulf of age and experience between us and treated me as an equal, a citizen with them in these realms of thought. And in this supposedly busy and efficient world, heedful only of money-making, I never failed to find such people. Sometimes they were my school-teachers; the public library enshrined the most gracious of them all; but they were also to be found in offices, where they never seemed to be too busy to stop and talk with me for an hour about the utterly impractical enthusiasms we had in common. I found them at Socialist meetings and in churches, in newspaper offices and on farms. We were friends by virtue of a community of enthusiasm. And it has never occurred to me to envy on behalf of my youth those more urbane old-world societies of another era where a young man of talent could have, on terms gratifying to his hungry young egotism, the companionship and conversation of beautiful and witty women, of sage and kindly men; for I had it. I must perforce believe when I am told by critics of American life that such men and women are all too few; but I found those few. They enriched my youth with their beauty and wisdom until it glows golden in my memory.

But this sharing of impersonal enthusiasms was not all these friendships afforded. That was all I knew enough to demand; but I received something else, of even greater significance. It is rather hard to describe, for it was merely candid talk, about the world, about life and love, and about themselves. Yet it was not a small thing. These people, having lived in the world, having suffered and loved and thought, had something stored away in their hearts needing to be told but not to be told idly. And they told me. It was as if they had said: "You are the sort of person who ought to know what I have to tell; perhaps you won't understand it—but neither do I. And it isn't a thing that concerns only myself; it seems to belong to you, too."

I don't know if I have made clear the nature of this talk. I resent instructive discourse, and am restless under propaganda. There was no argumentative purpose in the talk of my friends. They might have a certain view of the world, and it might be apparent enough in what they said; but it was not an effort to convert me to any-

* This is the eighth of a series of articles by American writers of the first rank, answering in the light of their general experience the question: Can a literary artist function freely in the United States? Other articles will follow. Mary Austin, Theodore Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson, Zona Gale, Edgar Lee Masters, Ludwig Lewisohn, and Sinclair Lewis have hitherto contributed.

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thing, or to persuade me of anything. What I might do with it was a matter of indifference; but it was felt to be somehow rightfully a part of my education. I must know truth—not a grand abstraction but particular and intimate truth—about life and love, and about themselves as persons who had lived and loved. There was a candor about these revelations to which fiction with its orderly rearrangements of the chaos of human experience can only feebly aspire; it was something one can scarcely get from books, but only from the talk of friendship—the raw, sweet, harsh, terrible, beautiful stuff of life itself.

I have been told that there is in America a social conspiracy to conceal from the young the nature of life, to oblige them to accept pretty and absurd conventions about it the falsity of which they must painfully discover—and waste years in discovering—for themselves. So it may be; but what I am better acquainted with is this generous and disinterested effort of those who had lived to impart to one just beginning life their hard-won sense of its cruelty and beauty. They wanted to tell.

This seems to me a thrilling and a lucky experience for any young artist; one of the happiest possible circumstances of his youth, outweighing all the hurts to which he is exposed by virtue of being of that sensitive tribe out of which artists are made; and full of obscure but profound encouragement to artistic achievement—if only by way of justifying in his art these tokens of confidence from those who so early knew him for what he was. And I should hate to believe—I do not believe—that this experience is unique in American life.

The Political Theory of Harold J. Laski

By WALTER JAMES SHEPARD

THE present is one of those transitional epochs in the development of political ideas which are the product of changed and changing conditions in the objective field of institutions. The industrial revolution with all its consequences of an elaborate and complex economic and social institutionalism compels a reappraisal of the eighteenth-century ideology which has lingered on in the minds of men. Out of this shaking up of the dry bones of outworn theory there may eventually emerge a body of generalizations more realistic and more truly explanatory of the actual facts with which we are confronted.

Among those who challenge the orthodox interpretation of the nature of the state, Harold J. Laski takes a preeminent place. He is the foremost exponent of the view which has come to be described as "political pluralism." His first important work, "The Problem of Sovereignty," appeared in 1917. His other significant volumes include "Authority in the Modern State," 1919; "Political Thought from Locke to Bentham," 1920; "The Foundations of Sovereignty," 1921; and finally "A Grammar of Politics," very recently off the press.[1] In addition to this substantial product of less than a decade's labor there are a considerable number of important articles in legal and political journals to be placed to Mr. Laski's credit. In general his earlier works may be said to constitute a devastating attack upon the orthodox theory of state sovereignty. In his latest and most ambitious undertaking he attempts a constructive proposal for a reformed political and economic order.

The demolition of the doctrine of state sovereignty was an indispensable preliminary to the elaboration of constructive proposals. This ancient dogma has indeed been subjected to raking fire in recent years from a number of quarters. It stands so directly athwart the development of any effective system of international control, and is so manifestly inconsistent with the already attained actuality of international law and international organization, that a general consensus is rapidly being reached among international lawyers definitely casting it into the discard. United States Senators may still oppose our entrance into the League of Nations on the ground that this would violate the sacred principle of our national sovereignty, but to more serious students of international affairs such arguments appear highly doctrinaire. The notion of state sovereignty has suffered such a serious breach externally that it no longer offers effective resistance to the impact of internationalism. It is on its internal side that the idea still holds the field, albeit somewhat shaken. And it is against this intrenched position that Mr. Laski has directed his most formidable attacks.

The doctrine of the sovereignty of the state, like all important political doctrines, was the direct product of historical events. During the Middle Ages there was no recognized supreme power. Pope and emperor, baron and free city contested with the king for the position of highest authority. But eventually the national state emerged from the medieval chaos and its king made good his claim to unlimited legal power. The doctrine of sovereignty was first clearly formulated in connection with his contest for supremacy. It was for him a useful weapon, and moreover served a useful social purpose. The times demanded a strong, centralized national state. But the theory was never a completely valid explanation of the facts. Even at the height of monarchical absolutism the church continued to enjoy rights which the state could not question, and simple folk continued to buy and sell, to marry and bequeath their property according to laws of immemorial usage—laws which the king, embodiment though he was of the state's sovereign authority, could not successfully modify.

With the appearance of constitutional government the idea of monarchical sovereignty gave way to that of parliamentary sovereignty, and that in turn to the notion of popular sovereignty. Difficulties appeared in connection with federal states, and curious paradoxical conceptions of divided sovereignty emerged. In England, according to the leading writer on constitutional law, there is both a legal sovereign, parliament, and a political sovereign, the people, though we are left in doubt as to whether by "people" is meant the electorate or the more inclusive but quite amorphous mass of the population from which the intangible but increasingly potent force of public opinion emanates. To locate the elusive sovereign has sufficiently taxed the ingenuity of such able protagonists of the orthodox doctrine as Professor W. W. Willoughby, who finds it ultimately, in the United States, in a process—the amending process. Surely it is a far cry from the Grande Monarque of seventeenth-century France, whose vaunt "L'état c'est moi" could scarcely be challenged, to the procedure by which the Eighteenth and Nineteenth amendments were enacted, requiring as they did the concurrent action of seventy-four separate deliberative assemblies.

[1] "A Grammar of Politics." By Harold J. Laski. Yale University Press. $6.

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One might suppose that these embarrassments would have long since raised serious doubts concerning the realistic value of the doctrine of sovereignty. But strange to say, it weathered these storms well-nigh unscathed. It was left to Mr. Laski to direct an attack from a different quarter. Building on the previous work of Professor F. W. Maitland ("Political Theories of the Middle Age") and Professor J. Neville Figgis ("Churches in the Modern State"), he investigated the nature of corporate bodies—all the multifarious economic, ecclesiastical, and social groups which give color and character to our modern civilization. And his conclusions were two: First, these corporations or group-units are real and not fictitious entities. The state's act of incorporation does not create, but merely recognizes a preexisting juristic personality which possesses an independent will of its own and is an independent subject and object of rights. It is significant that in recognizing the suability of unincorporated trade unions the highest court in England in the Taff-Vale case and the Supreme Court of the United States in the Coronado case have gone a long distance toward accepting this view. Second, the state is discovered to be merely a particular kind of corporation, one species of the general genus "corporation." The implications of this new concept of corporations were drawn, so far as the church was concerned, by Professor Figgis; primarily pleading for a "free church in a free state," he definitely attacked the doctrine of state sovereignty. Like the family, the church is not the creature of the state but finds its origin in the social life of man, its justification in the satisfaction of social needs. It is obvious that the same conclusions can be drawn with regard to such economic group-units as trade unions, and it is here that Mr. Laski has perhaps made his most significant contribution. It is insisted that they are corporate personalities with wills of their own, and with rights of their own which the state must not invade.

Though emphasizing the reality and significance of groups as independent centers of rights, Mr. Laski—in this differing from some other pluralists—finds the ultimate criterion of value in the individual. The enlightened will of the individual is for him the final basis of authority. Indeed, the individual is possessed of certain fundamental, inherent rights. This sounds like a revamping of the thoroughly discredited eighteenth-century theory of natural rights, but it is not. For Mr. Laski, individual rights are not God-given or Nature-given, but constitute that minimum of liberty which human experience has demonstrated is essential to the maintenance of the "good life." "Rights, in fact, are those conditions of social life without which no man can seek, in general, to be himself at his best," and "in any state the demands of each citizen for the fulfilment of his best self must be taken as of equal worth." "The theory of rights is the avenue to a creative view of politics." Rights are not emanations of the state's will; they exist independently of it; to secure them the state, like other associations, exists and finds its *raison d'être*. Such rights, grounded upon historical experience, at least include liberty of thought and word and of assembly, a minimum of education, and an opportunity to work, to receive a wage that will secure such a standard of living, and to enjoy so much leisure as is necessary to realize the possibilities of the good life. Mr. Laski does not believe that historical experience warrants the inclusion of the "right to property." It is not essential to the good life.

In the second part of the "Grammar" Mr. Laski attempts the framing of a system of political and economic institutions through which these rights may be practically secured. The formulation of a concrete program of reform is always a dangerous experiment. Nevertheless there is a real value in such undertakings. They may in some respects shoot wide of the mark. They are certain to be characterized as visionary and utopian. But if there is ever to be a real science of politics, such efforts at constructive statesmanship must be made. They are not visionary if they are grounded on a thorough analysis of the facts of life; they are not utopian if they embody the sound principles and ideals which such an analysis discovers.

On the political side there appears no very radical departure from accepted ideas. The organization of government follows in general plan that of the parliamentary or cabinet type on the English model, and is operated through a biparty system. The most important changes are a written constitution amendable only by an unusual and difficult procedure; the principle of judicial review; a unicameral legislature; a system of legislative committees paralleling and in close organic relation with the departments of the administration; a quasi-judicial system of committee hearings in connection with legislation, affording opportunity for the utilization of the technical information and advice of officials in the permanent civil service; an elaborate system of advisory committees through which the public is brought into organic relation with the administration; and a high degree of geographical decentralization of the administration and local self-government. There is certainly nothing in any of these proposals of a particularly startling or revolutionary character.

It is when Mr. Laski undertakes a description of the economic organization for a reformed commonwealth that his pluralistic philosophy bears radical fruit in an elaborate scheme of industrial democracy. Industries are of three types, each of which must be organized on a different principle. First are those which are urgently affected with a public character and by nature are monopolistic. Nationalization is for these the solution; the element of private profit must here be entirely eliminated. The second class include those industries which produce urgent or at least socially desirable commodities, but which are not monopolistic in nature. Agriculture is a typical example. Here there is a large place for the individual producer, but the interest of the community is paramount. Considerable variety of organization is possible. In the case of the more urgent commodities, such as milk and bread, the less opportunity afforded for private profit the better. Since they primarily affect the householder, they constitute the natural province of consumers' cooperatives. Those industries which produce less urgent but still socially desirable commodities might be organized privately in the form of joint-stock companies or as producers' guilds, for which Mr. Laski foresees a considerable future. They would in either case be subjected to a high degree of governmental regulation. The third class of industries are those whose product is not vested with any public character. Cosmetics is an example. These might be organized in any fashion, and would be subjected to governmental regulation only so far as it was necessary to secure adequate standards of wages, hours of labor, working conditions, and the like, and a real share for the workers in determining these.

On the basis of this analysis there is projected a most ingenious and complex system of economic institutions. At the apex is a Ministry of Production charged with the

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function of supervising and coordinating the various agencies in the entire mechanism of industry. For each nationalized industry there is a subordinate Minister of Production. The actual control of each of these industries, however, is vested in a Governing Board and District Boards, composed of three elements: management, including technical experts; the various vocations, manual and clerical; and the public. The District Boards appoint the managers of the individual factories and mines through a system of open competition. In each industrial unit there is a Works Council which, in constant touch with the manager, confers on the day-to-day grievances which arise in the administration. The fundamental questions of wages and hours are national in scope and their determination should be uniform throughout the industry. This is accomplished through agreements between the Governing Board or District Boards and representatives of the national vocational associations or trade unions.

Intriguing as are Mr. Laski's proposals they can scarcely be expected immediately to attract a very great host of adherents. But if it is true, as can hardly be denied, that our highly technicalized and complex twentieth-century industrial system is subjected to an utterly inadequate and obsolete scheme of social control, dating for the most part from the eighteenth century or earlier, a somewhat daring inventiveness in suggesting reforms is to be cordially welcomed. Certainly in approaching the consideration of the practical desirability of such changes as Mr. Laski proposes we ought not to permit outworn shibboleths from the distant past, like that of state sovereignty, to drown the voice that may be prophetic for our own time.

Books

First Glance

THE key to "Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years," by Carl Sandburg (Harcourt, Brace: 2 vols. $10), is a sentence in the preface. "The folk-lore Lincoln," says Mr. Sandburg, "the maker of stories, the stalking and elusive Lincoln is a challenge for any artist." Or, if it is not that sentence, it is another one quoted later on from Carlyle, who, writing to Emerson concerning the invasion of the West by Yankees "with most occult unsubduable fire in their belly," broke out: "Oh, if we were not a set of Cant-ridden blockheads, there is no myth of Athene of Herakles equal to this fact;—which I suppose will find its real 'Poets' some day or other; when once the Greek, Semitic, and multifarious other cobwebs are swept away a little!" It is Sandburg the artist, the epic poet, who has attacked this largest and most complicated of all American subjects—the subject being, of course, not merely Lincoln himself, though Lincoln was complicated enough, but in addition the whirlpool of cultures out of which he was flung into fame. Nor does Mr. Sandburg seem to believe that he has finished the job. As Standish O'Grady's "History of Ireland" spaded up legends for Yeats and Synge to cultivate, so this epic in the rough will turn the pens of coming poets, it is implied, in fruitful directions. "Perhaps poetry, art, human behavior in this country, which has need to build on its own traditions, would be served by a life of Lincoln stressing the fifty-two years previous to his Presidency."

I should hasten to say that although I find Mr. Sandburg's book amply and profoundly beautiful I find it so in spite of some rather obvious "poetry" stuck in here and there. "Beyond Indiana was something else," we are told —something much more vague, I suspect, than anything in Lincoln's mind ever was. It is annoying to hear from page to page in the first volume of some tender transcendental want that "still lived in him, lived far under in him, in the deeper blue pools of him." There is no harm in a paragraph like that which ends the thirty-sixth chapter:

> If a blizzard stopped blowing and the wind went down, with the white curve of a snow floor over Salem Hill looking up to a far blue scoop of winter stars blinking white and gold, with loneliness whispering to loneliness, a man might look on it and feel organization and testimony in the movement of the immense, relentless hubs and sprockets on the sky.

But, in view of Mr. Sandburg's general purpose, there is no particular good in it either.

For the poetry Mr. Sandburg was after, I take it, was the poetry immanent in the facts. And on facts—thousands of them—he ultimately rests his excellent case. He seems to have done an immense amount of what for him was the right kind of research. He walked and talked through the many towns of Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois where people had known Lincoln. He explored, I am sure, all of the Lincoln literature which had something personal to tell. He read bundles of letters and ran his hands over shelves containing mementos. He pushed his mind to the outermost limits of the world which was to influence Lincoln and which he was to influence—the world of European and American politics, industry, travel, science, letters, religion, and art. He familiarized himself with distant contemporaries—Audubon, Melville, Emerson, P. T. Barnum, Walt Whitman. Then he drew his imagination back to make itself at home in the civilization which actually shaped Lincoln, or helped to shape him. Here is God's plenty indeed. Here is the lining of the old Mid-Western mind. Here are the songs all people sang, the poems they recited, the proverbs they spoke, the superstitions they could not discard, the machines they used, the clothes they wore, the facts they learned in the newspapers, the gods they swore by, the dishes they ate, the jests they laughed at. As Mr. Sandburg goes on he becomes drunk with data, and in true Homeric fashion compiles long lists of things. "Orchards were being planted with new kinds of apple trees, Winter Sweets, Red Streaks, Red Russets, Yellow Hearts, Rainbows." "And there were horses, and men riding and driving who loved horses . . . roans, grays, whites, black horses with white stockings, sorrels with a sorrel forelock down a white face, bays with a white star in the forehead. . . . They spoke of one-horse towns, one-horse lawyers, and one-horse doctors—even of one-horse horse doctors."

Of Mr. Sandburg's picture of Lincoln himself—Lincoln inside and out—it is more difficult to speak. I prefer to leave it quite unspoiled. Few men and women are truly mysterious. Lincoln was, and in my opinion Mr. Sandburg has presented the elements of that mystery more subtly and more completely than I have ever seen them presented before. Jasper Conant recorded that as he began to paint the candidate for President in 1860 "there came over his face the most marvelously complex expression I have ever seen." Mr. Sandburg comes as near as any man could come to telling why.

MARK VAN DOREN

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"The Fanatic of Liberty"

Jefferson and Hamilton: The Struggle for Democracy in America. By Claude G. Bowers. Houghton Mifflin Company. $5.

Correspondence of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson [1812-1826]. Selected with Comment by Paul Wilstach. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

Jefferson et les Idéologues d'après sa Correspondance Inédite avec Destutt de Tracy, Cabanis, J.-B. Say, et Auguste Comte. Par Gilbert Chinard. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. $2.

HAS the predominance of reactionaries in American politics revivified the memory of Jefferson, "the fanatic of liberty" as he called himself? Mr. Bowers disclaims any purpose in writing his volume that lies outside the circle of historic truth; yet so saturated has the emotional life of Americans become with democratic idealism, in spite of their practice, that he is assured that an honest exposition of Hamiltonian doctrines will result in the condemnation of these doctrines in the popular court. The vividness of his slashing style makes the verdict inevitable. With the other two volumes the evidence of purposive labor is not so obvious. Possibly Mr. Wilstach visualized the educational value for Klansmen and fundamentalists of a correspondence about politics, philosophy, and religion between two spirits whom old age and retirement from public life had set free. In the writer of the third book we have a student who is exploiting in a succession of volumes a rich mine long neglected by American students. The answer to my question is not so obvious, as might be expected; still my inclination is to discover in the growing interest in the apostle of democracy an unconscious rebound from the forces of capitalism intrenched in the seat of government. Mr. Bowers closes his volume with the statement: "The spirits of Jefferson and Hamilton still stalk the ways of men—still fighting." Today no doubt the spirit of Hamilton is chortling. The campaign of 1800 has been avenged.

To make known the traditions of a people is the one function of the historian which can be justified, for the past has created the social psychic environment in which the present generation grew to manhood. Now no man, whether he be Washington or Lincoln, has done so much to create the mental stereotypes dominating our political emotions as did Thomas Jefferson, the chopper of psychic kindling wood for American political fires. Unfortunately, political stereotypes become, like religious dogmas, inelastic, aberrant, and inhibitive. Possibly they may be cured by a bath in the fountain whence they issued. Certainly no evil will result from a clearer knowledge of Jefferson and his ideals.

Mr. Bowers has the ability to write a most interesting story of what he calls "the Plutarchian struggle"—meaning, doubtless, Homeric—of Jefferson and Hamilton. His career as newspaper editor has fitted him for the task. Experience has taught him an understanding of men and politics; and with understanding there has come to him a broad toleration of all species of belief and disbelief, of faith and skepticism. His chief interest, as a historian, is the evolution of men's divergent opinions and their consequent antagonism. In the fight of the protagonists of democracy and oligarchy in the opening years of our national life he has a great subject, to the dramatic character of which he does full justice. Possibly the reader will not think that this work reveals as much originality as the author's "Party Battles of the Jackson Period." One reason is obvious. The period has been studied more carefully and more frequently than the one in which the "General" figured; and Mr. Bowers, in spite of his boast that he has dispersed many myths, has little that is new to tell the student who is familiar with the monographic literature. But Mr. Bowers is writing primarily for the general reader. So he has prepared himself well by the study of contemporary newspapers and pamphlets, the writings of public men, and the interpretations of his forerunners. The result is a most readable book. We, therefore, can forgive him his occasional misuse of words, some ill-constructed sentences, and a few errors such as the reversal of the roles of Otis and Adams in the court where was argued the Writs of Assistance; for his drama, although crowded with figures, never lags, never wearies the reader, never loses the theme. Even the minor characters, and they are numerous, enter upon their parts with flesh, blood, and passions, as they appeared to their contemporaries.

Mr. Wilstach in his selection of the Adams-Jefferson correspondence quotes a commentary of Mr. Adams upon this Homeric political struggle which Mr. Bowers has so seriously portrayed:

> The real terrors of both parties have always been, and now are, the fear that they shall lose the election, and, consequently, the loaves and fishes; and that their antagonists will obtain them. Both parties have excited artificial terrors, and if I were summoned as a witness to say, upon oath, which party had excited, Machiavellially, the most terror, and which had really felt the most, I could not give a more sincere answer than in the vulgar style, put them in a bag and shake them and then see which comes out first.

Jefferson was probably not so convinced as Adams was that his fight against Hamilton was of a fictitious character. In his correspondence with his former opponent Adams and with the French philosophers he remained faithful to his democratic creed. His French friends agreed with him; in fact, as reaction closed down upon them, they turned their eyes with longing to America, where the great experiment they had hoped to try was working itself out. To them Jefferson's administration had raised the experiment to the realm of reality. Democracy had been tried and had succeeded. The sage of Monticello was the savior of the liberty of the world, and to him all opponents of monarchy bent their knees. From 1800 till his death Jefferson occupied a unique position, the counselor of American Presidents and the hero of European liberals.

Opponents have so frequently called Jefferson a theorist that popular opinion is inclined to place him among the impractical dreamers and to contrast him with Hamilton, who is supposed to have followed a Realpolitik. The opposite is nearer the truth. Hamilton, maladroit in act and obstinate in thought, ran counter—as Mr. Bowers makes plain—to the reality in which he lived. Jefferson was a man of action, a crafty politician, understanding the social forces of his time and knowing how to utilize and guide them. In his correspondence he reveals himself as a man turning from theories to seek the solid facts of life. In one of his letters he sets forth his creed:

> These dreams of the day, like those of the night, vanish in vapor, leaving not a wreck behind. The business of life is with matter. That gives us tangible results. Handling that, we arrive at the knolege (*sic*) of the axe, the plough, the steamboat, and everything useful in life; but from metaphysical speculations I have never seen one useful result.

CLARENCE WALWORTH ALVORD

A Peculiar Wanderer

Seventy Summers. By Poultney Bigelow. Longmans, Green and Company. Two volumes. $10.

I HAVE no doubt I should like Mr. Bigelow, though I should differ from him violently upon every matter of opinion. There is something racy and courageous about him. In a wandering life he has acquired a great amount of information, derived from life itself and not from other people's books. He has visited many lands between China and Panama, and he has kept his eyes well open. He has met and sometimes known many famous and significant people in the four main

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continents, and what he has to say about them is often shrewd and occasionally kindly. As a journalist he has shown a fine independence, and has taken the good and evil fortunes of our hazardous profession with equal thanks, though the fortunes seem to have been chiefly evil. In the end he has retired into what stands for "nature" on the reaches of the Hudson, and indeed there is a touch of the wild about him throughout—a refreshing touch. He writes a clear and vigorous language, though he splits his infinitives so violently as to give me a slight shock, from time to time, as though my car had run over a dog. But one gets accustomed to those little accidents.

I suppose I must count it to his credit also that he admires my country and our people more than any other. At least I think he does, for he often holds our policy and government and manners up to admiration in comparison with those of less happy lands, and he is not given to admiration—far from it. He admires England so much that, though from boyhood he had been acquainted with the ex-Kaiser, he broke off that acquaintanceship after the Kaiser's telegram to Kruger congratulating him on the defeat of the Jameson raid. And he admires English people so much that he writes in praise even of Mr. Gladstone, after a long and interesting conversation with him, though he must have disagreed savagely with every principle of Gladstone's life. If Mr. Bigelow had been born an Englishman, I think he would have grown into a cranky old Die-Hard, resolutely opposing all extensions of democracy and all advances of "progress." I can well imagine him as a crusted English squire, healthy, fond of sport, kindly to his tenants so long as they obeyed his caprices and voted Tory, enjoying his port wine, his solid food, and the company of pretty women, loving his horses and dogs, tolerating the parson as useful for keeping the poor in order, enthusiastic for war, and devoted to his country, which he daily said was going to the dogs, though he loved dogs, as before mentioned.

I suppose such a character to be rather rare in the United States, and perhaps that is why Mr. Bigelow so seldom speaks well of his own countrymen. He seems to hate nearly all of your best-known men, regarding each with indifferent contempt. Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Henry Ford, Booker Washington, Harold Frederic, Joaquin Miller, the Astors and the Vanderbilts—I really could not decide about which of them he says the most unpleasant things. He often reminds me of the young man who came to John Morley asking for journalistic work on the ground that he was specially good at vituperation. He admires Henry George for his "Progress and Poverty," and he admires Mary Anderson for her beauty, he being as susceptible to beauty as the rest of us. But there is something almost superb in his outspoken abuse of most other celebrated names; and if they are American names, so much the worse for them. Writing of the "Rough Riders" in your Spanish War, he begins a long denunciation of Roosevelt thus:

> Roosevelt is otherwise notable. He is the first American President who has from the beginning to the end of his career commercialized himself, and held out for the highest bidder.

From the numerous attacks upon the memory of President Wilson I take the first that comes:

> Mr. Wilson was acclaimed by France and England as a savior, whilst in fact he was merely a political impostor. . . . He went [to Paris] in order to please a wife who insisted on royal honors without having the faintest preliminary experience of that quality which royalty practices in the name of *noblesse oblige*. . . . He consulted no one in Paris but journalists who flattered him, and politicians of his own pacifistic and socialistic twist of mind.

So Mr. Bigelow goes on throughout the two volumes, and though we all enjoy seeing the weaknesses of the great exposed, such continuous abuse becomes a little monotonous. Yet one cannot help liking the man for his courage and freedom from

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pretense or snobbery. Neither rank nor riches can win his admiration, and in passing I might just warn him that he is utterly mistaken when he writes of the "much-coveted order of the British Empire." Under Mr. Lloyd George that order was scattered so profusely that the only distinction connected with it is not to possess it. If I ever had the honor of meeting Mr. Bigelow in his woodland home I know we should fight on everything, and yet I should enjoy being with him, just as I have enjoyed reading his book, though I detest almost every opinion in it. One word more: the author is not prudish. I hardly know how he can go on in so modest a State as New York, or what he would do on Coney Island under the notice: "Do not disrobe here, or you will be arrested." Mr. Bigelow disrobes anywhere.

HENRY W. NEVINSON

Crime and Punishment

An American Tragedy. By Theodore Dreiser. Boni and Liveright. $5.

MR. DREISER'S new novel is the crowning achievement of the work which he began a quarter of a century ago. To him it seemed then that novelists had lost themselves in their own refinement, that, enamored of moral delicacy and psychological subtleties, they had forgotten the simple motives by which the vast majority of mankind are moved; so with a single shrug he sloughed off once and for all the implications of the theory that man is primarily a moral animal and he did this much as the behaviorists in psychology sloughed off the soul. Let us, he said in effect, take life as I have observed it and let us see if it may not be explained upon the basis of what was afterwards called, in a brilliant analysis of his world, "a theory of animal conduct." Thus he began and thus, with a dogged insistence almost unmatched in literature, he has continued, unshaken by vituperation or neglect and unchanged by a growing fame; content to interpret an ugly world in terms of an ugly theory.

It is not, be it understood, that he denies the existence of delicate feelings or of moral restraints. The present book begins with a scene in which the family of Clyde, the hero, send up from a street corner the plaintive wail of a hymn which beats against the wall of a skyscraper and loses itself in the passing throng. Clyde himself is not unaware of the moral precepts which his parents have inculcated, nor is he unmoved by the thought of another's pain. But these things are pale shadows in comparison with needs and lusts which are nourished not by ideas and habits but by blood. They may go forth to battle but they never win; they may haunt the mind like overtones or like ghosts but they never direct a crucial action. Given a man strong enough, the lust for flesh and for power will lead him, if chance happens to favor, through the career of "The Financier"; given a man weak as the hero of "An American Tragedy" and, fortune against him, he will end with murder and the electric chair. One may revolt and rage if one likes; one may deny to Dreiser any universality for his philosophy; but one may not deny him his novels. He himself may choose what stories he wishes to tell, and no one can question either the ring of truth in the incidents or the adequacy of the motives assigned. Thus and for these reasons murders are done.

Dostoevski told once and for all the story of a metaphysical murder; he showed how an idea born of logic and carried through to a logical conclusion might lead a man by a series of reasonable steps to take a life. But murderers are not ordinarily moral philosophers, and Dreiser has told with almost equal finality the story of one of those more typical murders which merely happen. He has shown a young man, neither better nor worse than thousands, led step by step into a situation from which it seems that murder alone can furnish an escape. He has shown him caught in a web of pleasant little sins committed at the behest of the common desires indulged by half mankind, and he has shown him so little plotting with deliberate malice that at the instant of the crime itself he had not yet made up his mind whether he would commit it or not. Then, relying still upon the simplest of motives, he has shown how a district attorney with his eye upon a coming election brought Clyde to trial before a jury anxious to wreak its vengeance upon a representative of the privileged class and how thus a fate-driven criminal is brought unjustly to justice. At no point in all the vast and closely woven story does any motive based upon moral, social, or religious abstractions count. Clyde may be explained without them and so, with equal completeness, may those who happened to be in the position to enforce the law against him.

Had Mr. Dreiser substituted for the indefinite "An" of his title the definite "The" he would not have been wholly unjustified, for his story implies, with all the force of a concrete example, the tragic failure of this, the most pretentiously moralistic nation of the world, to live in the main by any law but the law of the jungle. Clyde, born into a family which preached tenets of a fanatical religion and a puritanical morality, observed as no intelligent person can help observing the hopeless inapplicability of that religion and that morality to the world as he found it. He cast them off to live by the commandments which his desires dictated because they alone had, in his experience, any real authenticity; and though a little knowledge or experience of the world as it is might have saved him, no amount of conventional moral instruction or religious training could have done so. Born an animal into an animal world he went clumsily to work to win for himself the satisfactions which all about him were winning, and for his clumsiness he was punished; but the civilization in which he found himself was one which had offered him no choice save that between a feebly sentimental religion and a disastrous experiment in anarchy. He had, in a word, the misfortune to be born in a country which offers in a hundred thousand churches to teach how to renounce life but which considers it highly immoral to teach how to live.

Unfortunately there is no space in a review so brief as this must be to describe the excellences which make this novel a complete justification not only of Mr. Dreiser's theories in so far as they apply to the milieu which he has chosen but of his art as well; it must suffice to say that the story, continuously interesting and continuously terrible, marches forward with a resistless energy. Incident is piled upon incident and fact upon fact, but never—and this distinguishes the present from all the other long novels of the author—does the structure grow unwieldy or the interest falter. Nor, it must be added, do the much-advertised faults of Mr. Dreiser's style come between the reader and the events which he is following; for so absorbing are the things communicated that one forgets completely the manner in which they are communicated—a fact which must mean, I take it, that Mr. Dreiser's style is, for his own purpose, perfect. "An American Tragedy" is, in fine, the greatest of its author's works, and that can hardly mean less than that it is the greatest American novel of our generation.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Admonitions from the Motherland

The Raven on the Skyscraper. By Veronica and Paul King. London: T. Fisher Unwin. 10/.

THIS pained and indignant volume is far more significant as a symbol than as a document. What it reveals is simply the view that prevails in England, *in petto* but in earnest, of this great Christian Republic. That view seldom gets itself stated in any forthright and hearty manner. The English labor under an unhappy dread of us, and so they try to be very polite to us. There ensue such affecting phenomena as the maudlin bulls of the Sulgrave Foundation, the boozy welcome

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to the American Bar Association, and the series of flattering addresses by successive British ambassadors. But all that is on the surface. Deep down the English regard us with powerful aversion, and now and then, say when a George Harvey becomes especially offensive, the fact busts out. At longer intervals some English patriot throws over politeness altogether, and rehearses the whole damning bill of complaint. This is what Mr. and Mrs. King have done in the present book. They loathe the United States and they are eager to make the fact known. They see it as a dangerous menace to the security and happiness of England, and hence, by a familiar step, to civilization itself. The Yankee is a mucker and a scoundrel. He has low tastes; he is a hog for money; he aspires absurdly to run the world. Let the guardians of the true morality be up and at him!

Unluckily, the authors wobble a bit when they come down to specifications. How long they sojourned among us I don't know, but their time was chiefly spent, very obviously, in highly dubious society and in the study of somewhat questionable documents. Their principal printed authority, in fact, is Henry Ford's *Dearborn Independent*, which is almost as if an American in England should put his trust in Lord Riddell's *News of the World*. They derive from it the theory that the United States is now run by the Jews, and that the Jews have the sinister aim of debauching American morals, reducing Christianity to a hissing and a mocking, and unhorsing the Anglo-Saxon. And what they do not get from the *Dearborn Independent* they get from the Babylonish excesses of Hollywood. Here they observe a lamentable *Totentanz*, with even the clergy flinging legs. It is such a tale as wandering friars from Britain brought home from the Byzantium of John Palaeologus. It is thrilling, but I fear that it is somewhat romantic.

"The Raven on the Skyscraper" thus falls considerably below "Americanization: A World Menace," by W. T. Colyer, of the British Labor Party. Colyer's philippic was acute and devastating: he got down to the fundamental weaknesses of the American scheme of things, and set them forth with great shrewdness and no little eloquence. Mr. and Mrs. King seem to be no more than transient and trivial journalists, gaping at the show and accepting the rhetoric of the barkers as gospel truth. But though their book thus fails as document, it remains of interest as symbol. Dislike radiates from it like heat from a stove or idealism from a Rotarian. It is incredibly tart and ill-humored. Only occasionally, and then by a sort of grudging afterthought, does anything American get any praise. Even the late Walter Hines Page is denounced—a fact hard for mortal mind to grasp, but still a fact. He was, it appears, not sufficiently anglomaniacal! As for General Pershing, he is guilty of a sort of misprision of treason: he has permitted the Motherland to be libeled among us without leaping up and yelling "Stop!"

Is there any considerable body of English opinion behind such grotesque arraignments? I believe that there is. I believe, indeed, that the vast majority of Englishmen, high and low, think the same way. The fact is commonly concealed by the discreet politeness of the English and by the extravagant Anglomania of a certain class of Americans, but it remains real none the less. England hates the United States for very sound reasons. We have gradually elbowed her out of first place at the trough. The average American of today is vastly richer than the average Englishman, and, what is more, he feels more secure in the world, and is thus happier. The happy nations are never liked; they are liked least by those peoples who have but lately parted from happiness. The great days of England are obviously done. Her old unchallenged power tends to become no more than a function of American power. She needs and gets our tolerance, but a certain unbearable patronage goes with it. Thus the old English scorn of the accursed Yankee turns into detestation. We are necessary, but we are abominable.

H. L. MENCKEN

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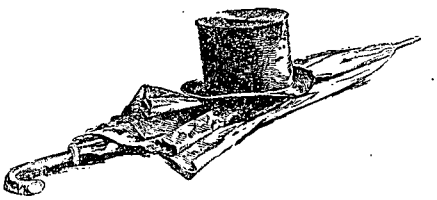

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Christian Science

The Faith, the Falsity, and the Failure of Christian Science. By Woodbridge Riley, Frederick W. Peabody, and Charles E. Humiston. Fleming H. Revell Company. $3.50.

THE spectacle of a well-appearing congregation of intelligent citizens emerging on a Sunday morning from a classical temple in a residential section of a flourishing city is a familiar one in every section of this vast and enlightened continent. To shout from the housetops and in forcible language that this procession of devotees of a spiritual cause is a formidable menace to all that science and religion and even sanity cherish may seem an ungracious act, may even suggest a prejudiced animosity. But such is the mission which this book undertakes and assumes as a moral and scientific obligation—the astounding charges it makes being abundantly justified by convincing evidence. We have here a righteous exposé of one of the most amazing movements in the history of American thought. To the lay observer who knows little of the origin of the cult and has a complacent smile for its vagaries, who knows nothing of its methods past and present, and who has no occasion to meet with the tragedies that follow in the wake of its strange denials, the reading of this account will prove a painful revelation; as also, if it could penetrate widely into the camp of the believers (not a likely consummation), it would prove a bombshell. To the man of average intelligence and ordinary humanity it will remain incredible that this all too amply documented story can really be true—incredible that the members of this cult whom he knows and with whom he does business should countenance such gross violations of reason, morality, and many another of the established values of civilization. As he closes the book, or as next he passes the church that shelters these doctrines, he cannot dismiss the hope that it is all a nightmare which will dissolve with the next awakening to the sober realities of the world which he shares with his Christian Science friends.

It is Mr. Riley's part to trace the sources of the doctrines which Mrs. Eddy made current. They are so directly taken from the manuscripts of "Dr." P. P. Quimby, to whom in 1862 she applied for treatment, that no word other than plagiarism can express the relation—an indebtedness acknowledged in her earlier days, but violently repudiated when the originality of Christian Science became a fixed tenet of Mother Eddy's belief. Mrs. Eddy had the use of a copy of the Quimby manuscripts in 1862; they were not printed until 1921 (by Mr. H. W. Dresser). In addition, there are such general sources as a vague mysticism articulate in the philosophy of Bronson Alcott, which Mrs. Eddy "paraphrased"; a folk-lore absorption of demonology; an antagonistic (somewhat Freudian) reaction to animal magnetism (hypnotism); and the personal traits and experiences of Mrs. Eddy, including her three marriages, her accusations and litigations, her delusions of persecution and of grandeur, her cupidity, her ailments and in general her limitations.

Compositely, Mrs. Eddy's actions—of which a course in "metaphysical obstetrics," or a paranoiac dread of "malicious animal magnetism," is as characteristic as the writing of "Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures"—are intelligible only in the light of her psychopathic personality. Her mental and educational limitations were such that she is presumably responsible only for the cruder, more imitative, jargon-like, and in later editions so carefully reedited and pruned portions of the famous and profitable textbook, and then only as to phrasing, not as to ideas. In the movement she was constantly leaning on others, and with this once launched she was swept on by the current of supporters who in later stages trafficked upon the market-value of her egocentric idiosyncrasies. This is a harsh verdict—though approved by many another student besides Mr. Riley—yet it forms an indispensable part of the diagnosis. That Mr. Riley's contribution to the

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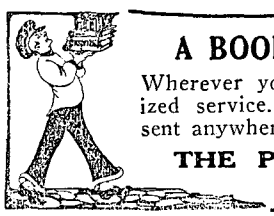

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"Cambridge History of American Literature" was suppressed when it appeared some years ago is a familiar story; it is now available. Though inevitably making a case, the author has conceived his task as that of setting in clear relations the sources of an interesting American movement, and he has acquitted himself admirably in the scholarship of this undertaking.

Mr. Peabody is a lawyer who conducted some of the cases which Mrs. Eddy brought to trial. Instead of such chapter-headings as Mysticism, Demonology, Divine Science, Psychoanalysis, we have the plain-spoken titles Autocracy, Suppression, Swindling, Lies, Cash; and these are just as essential to an understanding of the technique by which this amazing movement has succeeded in covering the land with prosperous churches and adding a new denomination to the religious census. The evidence cannot be summarized; it is only by the cumulative enormity of the several financial enterprises and the manner of their prosecution that the reader as juryman is eventually roused to a high pitch of indignation. However unsympathetic one may be with the movement, one cannot but regret that this sordid aspect of the actual proceedings in the case must be considered; Christian Science has been declared a business as well as a religion. The grasping despotism of the founder and her coadjutors makes a dismal story; that does not seem inherent in such a movement, which would have been equally instructive had the cult progressed as a fanatical but misguided enterprise. Mr. Peabody does not allow sufficiently for the psychopathic distortion of motives and their expression; what in a normal person would be nothing but greed, despotism, cruelty, and prevarication becomes in the psychopath a secondary outlet of delusional trends. Yet enough remains to justify the charges.

It is when we hear the third witness, the doctor, that the actual menace appears and indignation rises to the explosive point. People may be unreasonable in their beliefs, and contentious and grasping and dictatorial in their behavior, and still qualify for a fair measure of esteem, service, and happiness; but when their faith makes them inhumane and blinds them to the most serious realities of life, tolerance becomes a questionable virtue if not a culpable vice. When Dr. Humiston gives the experiences of just one surgeon—and scores are ready to add to his testimony—and tells with gruesome detail of one case after another of death through neglect of medical care and through dependence upon mental demonstrations; when mothers sacrifice their children to "science" and over their open graves cling to the faith that slew them; when every community in the land is exposed to dire contagion by the wilful neglect of the most elementary precautions in response to a belief that disease is a delusion of mortal mind—then the climax of the tale is reached and the role of charity difficult to maintain. The philosophic psychologist discloses the errors of mind and the vanity of delusion; the lawyer sets forth the infringement of the moral code and the attempts to avoid the penalities of criminal infraction; the doctor opens the door upon the spectacle of tortured and sacrificed humanity. It seems strange that there have not been more cases of unstable minds, crazed by a sense of loss, taking the law into their own hands and precipitating a tragedy.

And the paradox remains between this delusive philosophy, this autocratic cupidity, this inhumane disregard, and this procession of poised, kindly faces emerging from classical temples into the sunlight of a scientifically organized, humanized modern world. Fortunately man is not a consistent logical animal; people are better than their professions; and the real social forces that determine their behavior may be counted upon to offset their benighting limitations. We shall all continue to maintain our amicable or neutral relations with our Christian Science neighbors; yet some of us cannot, in the interests of all that we hold valuable, seal our lips or blind our eyes to the lurking menace of this singular American phenomenon.

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Relativity and Reality

The A B C of Relativity. By Bertrand Russell. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

Ether and Reality. A Series of Discourses on the Many Functions of the Ether of Space. By Sir Oliver Lodge. George H. Doran Company. $2.

The Tyranny of Time. By Charles Nordmann. Translated from the French by E. E. Fournier D'Albe. The International Publishers. $3.25.

IF the general reader finds it hard to catch up with the new notions of the universe following the advent of Einstein it is not for lack of volunteer expositors. Bertrand Russell, who achieved a brilliant success in explaining the theories of Bohr and Planck in his "A B C of the Atom," attempts in these papers, some of which appeared originally in *The Nation*, to perform the same service for Einstein—or rather for the public. For he sees, what many of his fellow-mathematicians do not, that the public is much concerned in this revolution in fundamental conceptions of science, and that when these become common property they are likely not only to upset conventional ideas of morals and politics but to "alter profoundly the whole texture of human life, since our present absorption in machinery and industrialism is the reflection in the practical world of the theorist's interest in physical laws." The sun is no longer monarch of the solar system, and it exercises no force on the planets. On the contrary, the planets plow through the obstructions in space-time raised by the sun in their center and take the longest and laziest route in getting around it.

To find out how far the Einstein revolution will affect popular thought and action we shall have to wait awhile, several centuries probably, but it is certainly very upsetting to our traditional and customary views. Little is left of the two fundamental laws, the conservation of mass and of energy, which nineteenth-century science regarded as absolute. Time and space no longer form a fixed and eternal framework, but vary with the observer. Whether one event happened before or after another cannot in many cases be determined; there may be a doubtful period, a band of indeterminable simultaneity, varying from seconds or minutes to millions of years. Gravitation is no longer considered to be propagated instantaneously throughout the universe; it may travel with the speed of light. The universe is not infinite but finite and, indeed, measurable. Many of the stars we see in the sky may be mere ghosts of their dead selves, revisiting every thousand million years the scenes of their past life and repeating there their previous performances. And, what is most disconcerting to the historians of science, the old Galileo case is reopened for new evidence.

"Ether and Reality" is a tautological title, for to Sir Oliver Lodge the ether is the real reality. While the younger set of scientists, influenced by Einstein, are disposed to discard ether, like the "force of gravitation," as an unnecessary fiction, the veteran physicist champions its claims with youthful vigor and strives to bring the old conceptions of his science into accord with the ideas of the modernists. To Sir Oliver ether is the most solid and substantial thing in the universe. "It is the densest thing known; there can be nothing more massive than ether: for, being a continuum, it is incompressible." He figures out that ether is 1,000,000,000,000 times as dense as water and is under a pressure represented by 1 followed by thirty-three zeros. Matter is nowadays conceived to be composed of two kinds of electrical corpuscles, negative electrons and positive protons, the former exceedingly light and the latter exceedingly heavy. Lodge finds in the ether a solution to this problem, for he suggests that the electron is a hole in the ether and that its complement, the proton, is crammed with the matter that was taken out of the electron hole.

The ether is the general handy man of the physicists. Whenever they find a phenomenon for which none of the known agencies is adequate, they say "Let ether do it." When the

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wave theory of light was introduced nothing could be found to do the waving, so this task was imposed upon the ether. When radio waves were discovered the ether was set to carrying them. So now Sir Oliver, believing he has evidence of telepathy and the survival of mind after death, makes the ether the medium of such psychic phenomena. And the ether never rebels, no matter what burdens are placed upon it. Having no manifest properties of its own, it may be endowed with whatever qualities and functions the scientists may desire, however contradictory these may be. Yet the ether seems to have no reason for existence except the need of the human mind, and especially of the Anglo-Saxon mind, for a mechanical analogy.

Charles Nordmann is the most popular of the French advocates of the theory of relativity. The latter part of his new book is taken up with a defense of Einstein against Bergson, who finds the new conceptions of time incompatible with his well-known ideas of time and duration. Nordmann admits that the French critics of relativity have scored a point in pointing out a fallacy in Einstein's illustration of the railroad train in his popular book on "Relativity." But Nordmann holds that it is unfair to condemn Einstein's unimpeachable mathematical theory because he chose a vulnerable analogy in the attempt to make his meaning plain to unmathematical readers. The greater part of the volume has no connection with Einstein polemics; it might have been written years ago, and probably was. In this the author deals with "those meteorological aphorisms which make up nine-tenths of human conversation." He explains how the calendar was formed and how it may be reformed. This historical sketch of clocks, climates, and calendars is written in the familiar and flowery style that made the author's earlier book, "Einstein and the Universe," a favorite with unscientific readers on both sides of the Atlantic.

EDWIN E. SLOSSON

Until Utopia

Tolerance. By Hendrik Willem van Loon. Boni and Liveright. $3.

THOSE who have read Mr. Van Loon's recent books (and there must be a great many such) will have already a pretty good idea of what this one is like. It isn't illustrated, which is a pity, since Mr. Van Loon's illustrations are often more effective than the text; but probably the subject doesn't lend itself to illustration. Otherwise the book has the Van Loon qualities. That is to say, it is discursive in the extreme, intimate, personal, highly subjective, genuinely humane in its sympathy even to the verge of sentimentalism, with quick shifts to the verge of cynicism as if to remind the reader, confidentially, that although kind hearts are indeed more than coronets no one need suppose that the sophisticated author can be easily duped.

Apart from such and other personal eccentricities and quaint conceits, which please some and repel others but which are neither here nor there, Mr. Van Loon's writings have three qualities which are worth attending to. The writing itself is generally good—unconventional, concise, simple, vivid, plastic, fitting easily the exact form of the thought. The thought at its best, which is not always, shows real imaginative understanding of people past and present and of the motives all compact of wisdom and folly which inspire them to mean or great action. The purpose of the thought and writing, or at least the purpose that most concerns the public, is to enable ordinary folk to learn something from history by showing them that people do now, under various disguises, very much what they did formerly under other disguises; so that, to take the present book, it is a cardinal mistake to suppose that we are no longer intolerant because we no longer burn people for religious heresy. Painfully elbowing my way out of a theater once, after witnessing Shaw's "Saint Joan," I heard a top-

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hatted gentleman say: "Well, it is good to think that nothing like that can happen now." This was, I suppose, to miss the whole point of the play. The gentleman was a shining example of Shaw's own dictum that the only thing we learn from history is that we don't learn anything. Mr. Van Loon, I think, really wishes to show people that the same things (as, for example, intolerance) persist from age to age under different forms.

But if Mr. Van Loon is not too complacent about our achievements up to date, he appears to take the view, or at least to entertain the hope, that poor Humanity is moving, however stumblingly, onward and upward. One gathers that there has been for two thousand years a "struggle for tolerance" going on, and that sometime in the future the happy day will dawn when, fear having been cast out, tolerance and humane feeling will reign triumphant. Well, it may be so, who knows? Best, at all events, to assume as much; for old Humanity will doubtless be more disposed to do well if we trust it a little, if we have faith to gamble on its hidden virtues and capacities. I am willing to do that. But I often wonder what will happen when Utopia is established. What, for example, will be the use and merit of tolerance when all are tolerant? Will people then soon forget the high value of tolerance and lapse into persecution from sheer boredom? Perhaps a history of tolerances would be nearer the objective facts than a history of tolerance. But still I commend Mr. Van Loon's book. I think it may be safely read, and with profit to readers by and large. Utopia is not so near that we need as yet take cruel and unusual precautions against the boredom of unrelieved virtue.

CARL BECKER

Two Artists and a Critic

Renoir: an Intimate Record. By Ambroise Vollard. Translated by Harold L. Van Doren and Randolph T. Weaver. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

The Last Years of Rodin. By Marcelle Tirel. Translated by R. Francis. Robert M. McBride and Company. $2.50.

Personalities in Art. By Royal Cortissoz. Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.50.

THE contempt of the artist for the critic is a recurrent note in the first two of these books, and the third, by America's most established art critic, unconsciously helps to explain and justify this proverbial antipathy. Each of the artists, when unrecognized and poor, endured from established critics the usual supercilious dismissal of his work as utterly unimportant, then the alarmed invectives of these defenders of national culture as his reputation grew nevertheless, and last of all the fawning compliments of the same and similar personages, eager to jump on the band-wagon, reminding the "Maître" of their lifelong friendship, and begging for some signed product of his genius. Mr. Cortissoz is the perfect example of the Salon or academic type of critic, a generation too late with his courageous praise of Renoir and Monet, and still condemning with stale and empty phrases about "unloveliness" and "lack of quality" the man whom Renoir and Monet delighted to honor—Cézanne. A still more recent innovator, whom Mr. Cortissoz ridicules, Renoir in his old age was young enough to appreciate. "Wasn't it you, Vollard, who told me that Matisse had been refused at the Autumn Salon? It's curious how people are positively repelled by real painter qualities in a picture." "Personalities in Art" abounds in garrulous anecdotes which are urbane and mildly entertaining for a time, but become more and more tiresome as they flutter aimlessly about, far from any real contact with either aesthetic values or significant personalities in art.

Vollard's reminiscences, on the contrary, teem with anecdotes that amuse and at the same time reveal a great and amiable personality. They are packed, besides, with good

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criticism on old and modern painters, and on aesthetic and technical issues—dropped unpretentiously in Renoir's jerky, careless comments by the way. Each comes with the force of a direct discovery from experience in making and looking at pictures, not as a repetition from the stacks of art magazines whose only use, to Renoir, was as a rest for his model's foot. Can one generalize from this case and Mr. Cortissoz's, and say that creators themselves are the best critics? Hardly, for Renoir's criticism has the limitations inseparable from its vividly personal quality; it is fragmentary, impulsive, not connected or thorough enough to show principles clearly. Unusually generous toward rival artists (much more so than Rodin's), it is never quite objective and dispassionate. Weaknesses are condoned through sheer good nature; in a mood of impatience great traditions are brusquely dismissed with a word. "Vollard: 'And what about Chardin?' Renoir: 'Chardin makes me sick. He has done some pretty still-lifes, perhaps.'" To this and other tormenting mysteries Vollard gives us no clue. He seems a fussy, inquisitive little Boswell; did the "master" (as eye-witnesses of some of these conversations assert) often talk over his head, or put him off with banter? At any rate, he has brought together a vivacious set of anecdotes, some highly diverting, to show a serene and simple man, living only to breathe in the shapes and colors of youth and summer out of doors, and giving out these forms, intensified in paint, as easily as he chatted with his friends.

Rodin's is a still less discerning Boswell, a lady who admittedly understands little of his art, but glories in having been one of the few devoted good women who ministered to the vain, childlike, irascible old man and protected him from the many designing bad women, government officials, and other villains of the play. Rodin, it appears, unlike Renoir, was ambitious to philosophize on art, but unable to express himself with any clarity in words. He had the countryman's dumb, half-respectful suspicion of the glib literary man, and intrusted his notes to critics for touching up—only to protest furiously against the finished product. The account throws doubt on some of the books of Rodin's alleged views on art, and confirms the point made above, that we cannot rely on the artist for adequate criticism of his own or others' works. A satisfactory art critic, apparently, must share to some extent in Mr. Cortissoz's facility for verbal expression, in Renoir's and Rodin's direct experience of plastic forms, and in another quality, unknown to any of the three: the capacity for sustained, dispassionate reflection on the universal qualities in this experience.

THOMAS MUNRO

Good Prose

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SINCE the last years of the eighteenth century, when the writing, publication, and critical reception of books became a process in which these phases of literature were in fixed relations, only those writers most defiant of notice or most isolated by circumstances from competition in society have written as whole men. Few have been indifferent to the rewards speedily due a "performance" for which the stage has been stiffly set at some loss to the fulness of spirit which is a privilege of detachment and leisure. If style, phrase by phrase even, is not thus corrupted—some, like Cabell and Hergesheimer, do not utterly escape this most insidious reach of the infection—then it is the design, the structure, that suffers; the novel must be done up with a mechanically episodic neatness, externally and too obviously a good job. For the audience has been increasingly the puppet of critical advertisement; writers grow wary of the advertising agent, anxious of success. Swift, Fielding, Sterne, the author of "Moll Flanders" and "Captain

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Singleton," all popular in their time, were not moved, in their essays into pure letters, toward an extraneous satisfaction—one may say, toward a repudiation of spiritual autonomy for the public advantage of familiar properties.

Mr. Hemingway and Mr. Dos Passos are writers of unusual integrity in this respect, though what they share is not a quality of style or method but simply a seriousness, a care for good prose in itself, that would exclude them from the inquiry of Mr. Stuart Sherman who discovers "significant novelists." Mr. Dos Passos may be said nevertheless to have partly measured the current taste, or to be caught in some of its deeper extensions, in so far as he has written a book the design of which is loosely episodic and has little organic relation to the implicit tendency of his subject matter—unlike the design, which is form and is identical with vision, in Henry James and Proust.

For in "Manhattan Transfer" design and style evince a noteworthy disparity. As to style, Mr. Dos Passos, here no less than in "Three Soldiers," is usually swift, vigorous, dynamic. That the person who achieved this precise notation of sound and motion can write there can be no doubt: "The minute rusty bird flew ahead, perched on a telegraph wire and sang, and flew ahead to the rim of an abandoned boiler and sang, and flew ahead and sang." But he has attempted to envisage such inchoate materials that the incumbrance wearies his capacity for fresh observation. The vigorous perception of one scene becomes the creaking device of the next. Houses begin regularly to smell of toothpaste, cabbage, soiled clothes; streets, of wet brick, garbage, immigrants. The verb "jiggle" occurs every three pages in a novel of about two hundred thousand words.

Yet Mr. Dos Passos has contributed a new point of reference to the American consciousness; henceforth our milieu is altered. "Manhattan Transfer" is a tableau of New York life from the first years of this century through the war; it brings an astonishing variety of characters, from every level of society, through the spiritual crisis of this period. He has approached the material as an artist. But he has not focused it. The novel lacks all unity of projection. It is controlled simply by the mechanism of time; it could have begun anywhere, and as arbitrarily ended. The treatment is entirely from without; Mr. Dos Passos, at crises, does not distinguish the significant action, inherent in character, from the massed succession of events. He does not provide, does not create the succeeding episode—the episode is contrived. The novel is a breathless movie scenario (it actually employs movie gags) of New York's Bohemia; it contains a great deal of excellent prose; it should have a considerable popularity. But since Mr. Dos Passos has limited his sensibility to the diligent registration of appearance and has not proposed an aesthetic problem, you will find that none is solved.

Ernest Hemingway has developed his chief distinction in prose through a careful rejection of "ideas"; he does not conceive his subject matter; he presents it. You will not be able to separate, in his facile accumulation of *petites sensations*, the observer from the observation, the reporter from the item reported; he never comments in excess of the immediate value of the object as a thing seen, of the event as a focus of observed motions. If he lacks the concept of character, he has an infallible deftness at projecting personality by isolating into typical significance some trivial accident of conduct. He lacks the ostentation of a writer inadequately equipped yet ambitious with a "theory of reality." Most typical of Mr. Hemingway's precise economical method is the story Big Two-Hearted River, where the time is one evening to the next afternoon and the single character a trout fisherman who makes his camp-fire, sleeps all night, gets up and catches a few trout, then starts home; that is all. But the passionate accuracy of particular observation, the intense monosyllabic diction, the fidelity to the internal demands of the subject—these qualities fuse in the

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ALLEN TATE

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Music

Puppet and Conductor

I HAVE been haunted by a puppet—a tall, gaunt, straggly haired puppet, clad in a suit of mail. In his hand he bears a sword, drawn ready for use; in his countenance is a lean and hungry look enhanced by a full and exceedingly melancholy eye. Every gesture that he makes springs from an impulse of knightly chivalry, and every gesture, as he makes it, becomes comic. He is, indeed, no other than that immortal champion of knight-errantry, Don Quixote, summoned into being by Remo Bufano for the League of Composers' presentation of "El Retablo de Maese Pedro" ("Master Peter's Puppet Show"). This new opera by the Spanish composer De Falla is based on the inn scene from Cervantes's imperishable satire wherein the inn-keeper's boy, Master Peter, presents for Don Quixote a tale of knight-errantry through the medium of marionettes. As De Falla has conceived his work we see a puppet show within a puppet show—the characters of the first depicted by dolls of the regulation inches, the living characters of the second by dolls of life size. And as the spare figure of the puppet knight moves through his part of spectator, meeting the exigencies of his author's extravagance with undeviating gravity of mien while a singing artist behind the scenes voices his sentiments without disturbing the illusion, I wonder that puppets are not used more as a medium of operatic expression.

Only a few weeks ago I had seen on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House another great comic character, Sir John Falstaff. The actor was Antonio Scotti—one of the few remaining singing actors who can be called great. He looked the part, he acted the part, he sang the part; and yet there was always some intrusion of voice or personality to remind us that Shakespeare's fat knight was Scotti. Mr. Bufano's lean knight never for one moment swerved from himself. Neither the visible working of his strings by Mr. Bufano, nor the presence of Mr. Mengelberg and Mme Landowska with a small orchestra, nor the singing of the Metropolitan artists could affect him. His sole concern was the tale that was being unfolded before him. Yet even as he shook his head in pity, or brandished his weapon in noble indignation, one laughed. It is, certainly, the very essence of the comic spirit that Mr. Bufano has caught and transfixed in his doll. The immortal Falstaff at the Metropolitan seemed very mortal indeed in the company of his neighbors, whose familiar faces and characteristics no amount of paint, whiskers, or costume could disguise. Watching the puppet Don at the Town Hall, tragic in his absurdity, absurd in his tragedy as he moved in conflict with other pieces of dangling mechanism, one caught that quality of eternity which has kept Cervantes's written masterpiece alive—a quality, too, which no living actor can give. With Mr. Scotti and his colleagues I took refuge in the music. With the marionettes I forgot all about it. And if I thought about it at any time it was to wish that the league had spent less money on the orchestra and more for expert puppeteers to work these masterly portrait dolls.

It was Leopold Stokowski, I believe, who in speaking some years ago of conductors in general and of Toscanini in particular said: "We are all schoolboys next to him." Since then, of course, Mr. Stokowski, as well as a few of his colleagues, has grown far beyond that callow age. Nevertheless, without any desire to underestimate either his or their abilities, one may be pardoned, perhaps, for still proclaiming Toscanini as the master. Other conductors come and go, leaving a trail of "interpretations" in their wake to be used afterward as a basis of comparison. With Toscanini there is no basis of comparison. One may listen to a Bodanzky floundering about in Bach, and wonder why he should be called a "Friend of Music"; or to a Goossens struggling with the "Rites of Spring" against an unyielding orchestra, and recall a happier occasion when thi same conductor led another orchestra through this same wor' and the "Rites" themselves seemed more like the primal frenz of creation, as conceived by Stravinsky, and less like the birt' of a turnip, as conceived by the New York Symphony; or again, one may listen to even a Stokowski riding his cheval d bataille, "Scheherazade," and yet let one's thoughts as well a one's eyes dwell on the changing blocks of color thrown on screen by the clavilux, speculating, even as these blocks inter pret the music, on the possibilities of such a fluidity of light design, and motive as a background for ballet or pantomime But when Toscanini conducts, one's thoughts do not go ventur ing. One does not care whether Abert's arrangement of Bach i good or bad, because one is hearing Bach himself in the fulnes of his glory; or whether Toscanini brings out of the "Pines o Rome" more than Respighi has put in, because what Toscanini brings out is supremely beautiful. Even the tradition-ridden "Fifth" of Beethoven and the threadbare show-piece of a Scherzo from Mendelssohn's setting to "A Midsummer Night's Dream" take on the freshness of new birth in the clarifying fire of Toscanini's genius. As for the Philharmonic Orchestra never has it displayed such a golden quality of tone, such unity of attack and purpose, such complete and exquisite responsiveness to the will of one man. And if it took a Toscanini to draw out these perfections in the Philharmonic, it also took the Philharmonic, it seems, to reveal all the perfections in Toscanini's conducting.

HENRIETTA STRAUS

Drama

The Tragedy of Masks

REDUCED to its simplest terms the theme of Eugene O'Neill's latest play is familiar enough. "The Great God Brown" (Greenwich Village Theater) is the story of an artist turned wastrel and cynic in an effort to hide the pain of his frustration, and the story of his relations with a boyhood friend who chose the path which promised to lead to safety and success. Yet it differs from the usual treatments of similar themes not only because it is cast in a highly fantastic form but also by virtue of the fact that it is no complacent satire on philistinism but a passionate attempt to expound the mystery of the artist's maladjustment and of that perpetual tendency of his to slide into the mud while aspiring toward the stars. Its hero, one who had "got paint on his paws in an endeavor to see God," blunders through life, torturing and tortured; he wears a mask because those who see his face are afraid and he turns cynic because "When Pan was forbidden the light and warmth of the sun he grew sensitive and self-conscious and proud and revengeful—and became Prince of Darkness." Yet even he cannot call his life good unless, in the Nietzschean phrase, life is good *because* it is painful. "I've loved, lusted, won and lost, sang and wept!"—so much he can claim. But his designs are blasphemies and his heart a maelstrom. Unhappy himself, he has been the cause of unhappiness in others, and when he dies he knows no more than that he has lived. He can taunt others with their impotence and he can flaunt his passion in their startled faces, but he cannot explain what his potency has availed him. He has not seen the face of either God or Devil clearly enough to know which was which, and it is with curses that he has uttered the sincerest of his prayers.

At no time during the course of his career has Mr. O'Neill given us a play more powerful or more confused than this. Never before has he dealt with a passion so nakedly personal, and never before has he allowed the chaos within to shatter so completely the form of the drama. To his characters he gives masks which from time to time they put on when self-revelation is too painful to themselves or others, but to himself he allows none; and the thirteen scenes of his play are thirteen dancing

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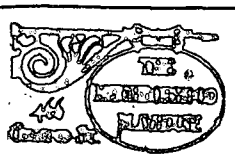
stars still molten and fluid like the chaos from which they sprung. They are moments in the life of a man described in a brilliantly poetic sentence as one who "had looked into his own dark and was afraid"; and they are thus, it is difficult not to believe, fragmentary confessions from that dramatist who has peered more intently than any of his countrymen at the fantastic shadows cast by reality upon the walls of the dark cavern which is the self. Essentially it is a tragedy of masks, the story of a group of people who even in their most intimate moments cannot bear to gaze for more than a few seconds at the naked faces of their companions; but for Mr. O'Neill it is an unmasking and an unmasking become tragic for the reason that the play itself makes clear. Bare himself as he will, we cannot see all that he would have us see; strip off one mask and there remains, or seems to remain, only another beneath it. We look at one another but we do not see; we talk but we do not communicate. And in the end we do what the wife does at the end of the play. She having lived all her life with a mask, takes it when her husband is dead and, all unaware that it is not he at all, promises with devastating irony that it shall live forever in her heart.

Whatever of confusion remains in the play must be inherent in the work itself, for the present production, directed by Robert Edmond Jones, is admirably acted and conceived with a remarkably complete grasp of the possibilities which the script affords. Not only the handling of masks but all the technical difficulties which production raised have been solved with great skill, and the play is, I believe, bodied forth upon the stage in as complete and satisfactory a manner as is humanly possible. If the effect remains more powerful than clear, more intense than illuminating, that is the result of the immediacy of the material with which the author is dealing. He is himself too close to the passions with which he is dealing to objectify them completely, and they master him quite as often as he is able to master them. Here, in a word, are passions as authentic and as burning as any that ever went into literature, but no one could say that they had been "recollected in tranquillity." In these parts are summed up the beauties and the defects of the play.

"The Makropoulos Secret" (Charles Hopkins's Theater) is a play, more ingenious than profound, by Karel Capek. It deals in an entertaining manner with a woman who possessed the secret of eternal life and it points, after the manner of the author, the moral of the fable. A group of men, having possessed themselves of the magic formula, conclude (as it may be remembered Leopardi concluded before them) that the secret of longevity is of little value in the absence of the secret of happiness, and they accordingly burn the parchment upon which the formula is written. The piece is well acted by Helen Menken and Ullrich Haupt.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

THEATER



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